

BUCHANAN: IS BUSH A NEOCON? ■ MOYNIHAN ON GULF WAR I

MAY 5, 2003 • \$3.00

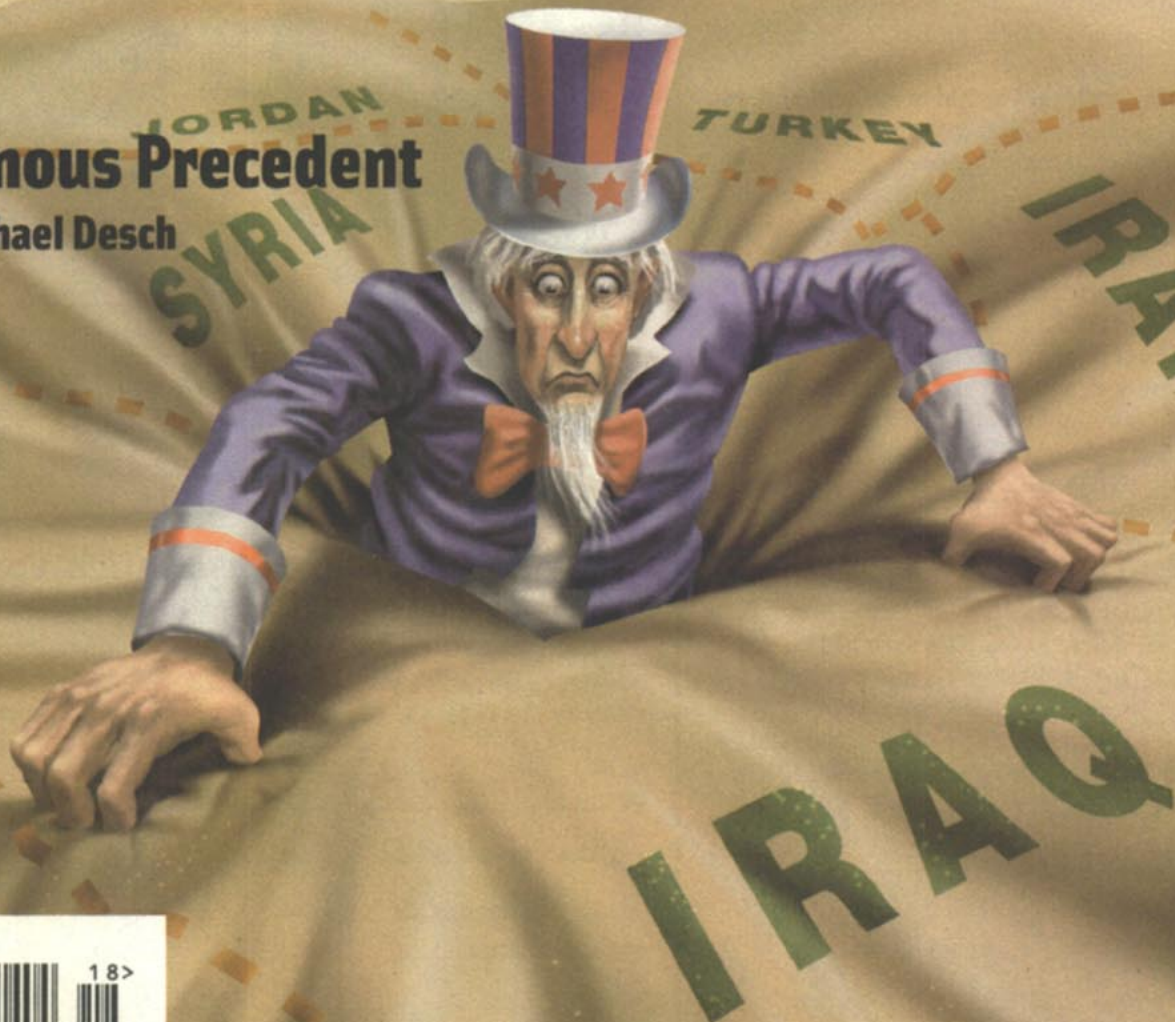
The American Conservative

Magnificent!

But Was It Victory?

Ominous Precedent

By Michael Desch



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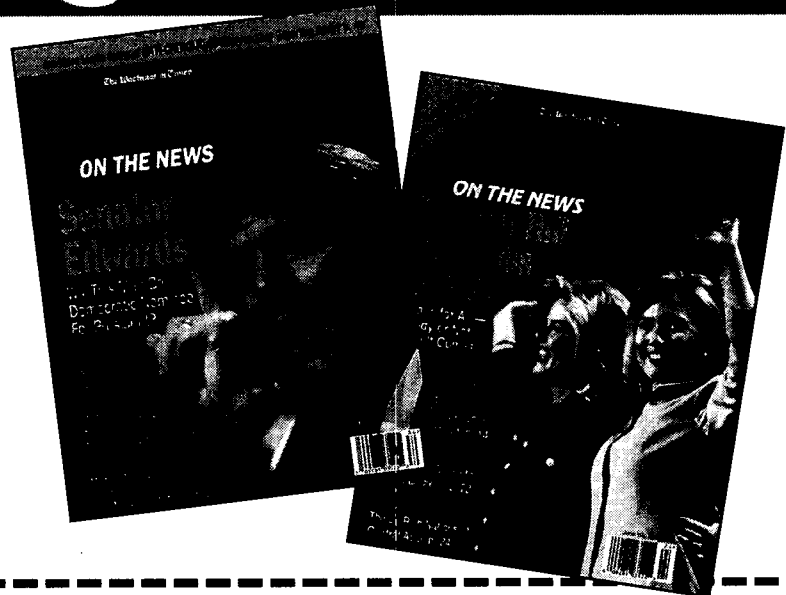
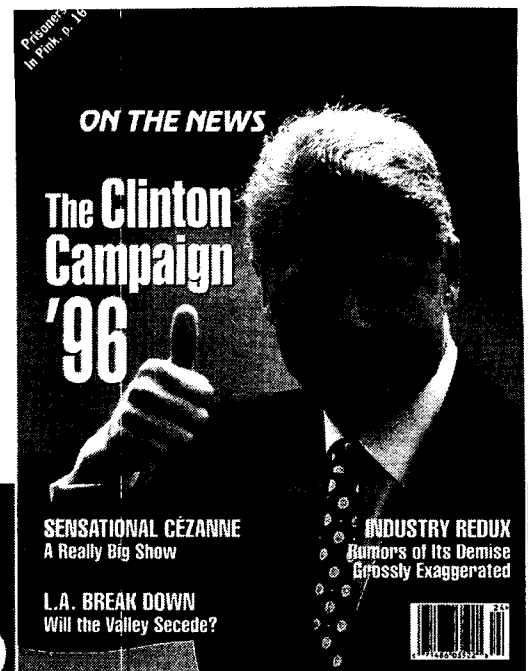
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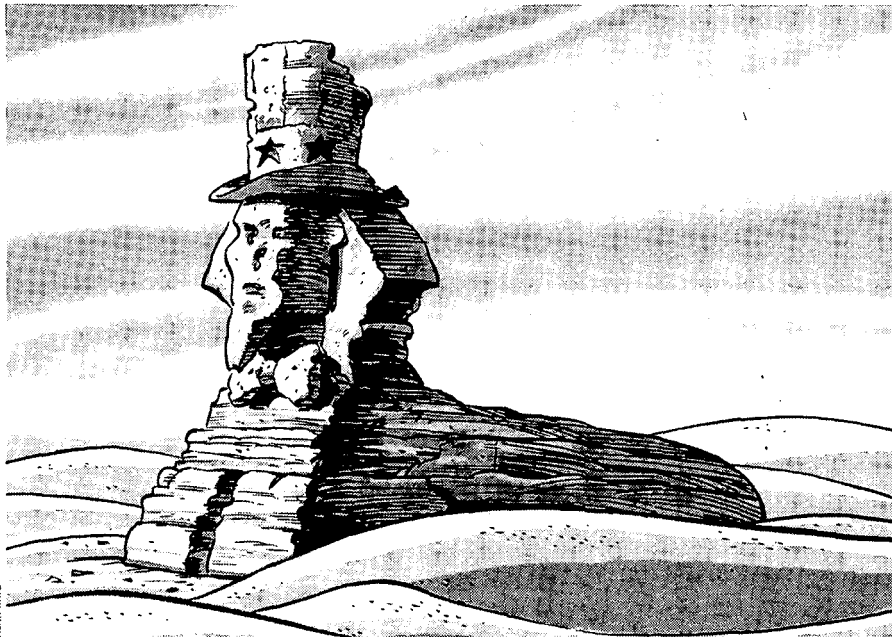
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[POSTWAR]

FAMOUS VICTORY

For the majority of Americans, it's been a thrill to watch U.S. troops easily vanquish Saddam Hussein's armies. We opposed this pre-emptive war while never doubting that the United States would win militarily and win quickly. A better time for measuring whether the war was a success might be a year from now when it will be possible to gauge realistically the impact of the invasion on Iraq, on the Middle East, and on the war against terror that gave the president political cover to launch this enterprise.

U.S. forces may yet find weapons of mass destruction—chemical and biological weapons—whose alleged existence provided President Bush his official *casus belli*. As of this writing such weapons have not been found and perhaps never will be. If they did exist in portable form, the doomed Iraqi regime would have had every incentive to transfer them as soon as the war started to al-Qaeda or whatever terrorists might be willing to use them against American targets months down the road, giving Saddam's regime revenge from the grave. In short, Americans may be no safer from terror weapons of Iraqi origin than they were a month ago. They could well be less so.

As for the more general war on terror, it helps to remember that most of the world has seen on TV a very different war than the one presented to American viewers. Reporters from Europe and the Mideast gave far more sustained coverage to Arab civilian casualties, far less to the rescue of Jessica Lynch or to interviews with the families of captured and wounded American soldiers. All, of course, were part of the story of the war, but it wouldn't hurt if Americans understood that the world saw the U.S. fight a far crueler and more gruesome war than the one we watched.

And much of the world does not share



the dismissive view of Donald Rumsfeld toward the looting of the Baghdad Museum, which scattered and perhaps destroyed irreplaceable treasures that are thousands of years old, or toward the general post-victory chaos in Iraq. While Americans are telling themselves that we have been welcomed as liberators, that is a kind of half-truth. Even the moving films of Iraqis cheering the toppling of Saddam's statue seem to have been staged, photographed in a square closed off from the general Baghdad population by a ring of American tanks. The fall of the Berlin Wall it was not.

The verdict is still out on whether this victory helps or hinders the real war on terror: whether it makes Americans more or less secure. Will foreign intelligence services co-operate more readily with the United States in the effort to track down al-Qaeda suspects? Will a healthy government take root in Baghdad?

We have learned that U.S. troops with total air superiority can blow over a Saddam-sized army in three weeks. The price of that demonstration has been a fracture of the Western alliance, leaving Washington more distrusted by its for-

mer allies in the West and more isolated from world opinion than at any time in the past century. What all this means for the security of the American people remains a very open question.

[PORK]

CONGRESS AT THE TROUGH

Citizens Against Government Waste is out with its annual list of federal excesses sure to offend taxpayers but unlikely to embarrass legislators nearly as much as it should. A sampling from this year's budgetary smorgasbord: \$4 million for an International Fertilizer Development Center; \$1 million to study the DNA of bears; \$4 million for West Virginia bus facilities; \$7.8 million for Hawaiian sea turtles. Real bargains include \$202,500 for the National Peanut Festival; \$250,000 for the National Preschool Anger Management Project; and \$500,000 for the International Coffee Organization.

Alaska wins big, scoring an estimated \$611 in per capita pork courtesy of Sen. Ted Stevens, who coincidentally chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee. Not to be outdone, ranking member Robert Byrd managed to lard in \$298

million for his home state of West Virginia. Just two years after candidates pitched lockboxes to secure a surplus, we're staring down a \$500 billion annual deficit complete with 9,362 pork projects. But not to worry. The Republican majority has a plan for having it all: the House just voted to raise the debt limit by nearly \$1 trillion—on top of the current \$6.4 trillion limit.

[ETHICS]

HANDMAID OF SOCIALISM

Peter Hitchens writing in the London *Spectator*: "There is nothing conservative about war. For at least the last century war has been the herald and handmaid of socialism and state control. ... The idea that naked force can create human freedom is itself a left-wing idea. ... The ability to ruin someone else's capital city without much risk to yourself makes you more likely to do so. It reminds me of Robert E. Lee's truly conservative remark after the carnage of Fredericksburg: 'It is well that war is so terrible. We should grow too fond of it.' For the attacker, war is no longer terrible enough."

[IMMIGRATION]

CRIME DOES PAY

No green card? No problem. Belize or Baltimore, it's all the same to the Maryland General Assembly, which has just passed legislation to offer in-state tuition to illegal immigrants. Students in neighboring Virginia pay two to three times more than local residents to attend Maryland's community colleges and \$10,000 more to study at the University of Maryland. But those here illegally can now reap the benefits of residency—more often than not without contributing to the state treasury.

And there's more. The week before, Maryland House members voted to study the possibility of making driver's licenses available to illegals, even though seven

of the 19 hijackers who struck Sept. 11 took advantage of Virginia's lax laws to obtain identification documents.

With state budgets straining to accommodate new security measures, subsidizing the higher education of illegals should come low on the list of budgetary priorities. And with the threat of terror never greater, enabling those who entered in violation of our laws to remain here comfortably seems the height of folly. But such is the power of the multicultural myth: fiscal concern and physical threat come second to the tenderhearted goal of enforced diversity.

[NEOCONS]

OLDER BUT NOT WISER

Judging by the neocon media machine, we have always been at war with Iraq (or at least always *should have been* at war with Iraq). Its monolithic uniformity has been impressive. Here, to take but one example, is *Weekly Standard* editor Fred Barnes on Sept. 23, 2002, in words that could have come from any of his colleagues: "The options now are crystal clear. ... Either the U.N. Security Council will enforce rigorous and sweeping restrictions on Iraq likely to lead to Saddam's collapse, or the United States ... will take military action to remove Saddam, destroy his weapons of mass destruction, and install a democratic government. ... As impressive as Bush was in the weeks after September 11, his performance in the past two weeks has been his finest hour."

Yet, despite the neocons' best efforts to purge dissenting voices and inconvenient history, an artifact from an earlier, less bellicose time has managed to avoid the memory hole. Here is the same Fred Barnes on "The McLaughlin Group" on July 28, 1990—the eve of Iraq's invasion of its little neighbor: "[I]t would be crazy to think that we're going to send troops over there and defend Kuwait."

What a difference a decade makes. ■

The American Conservative

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The American Conservative, Vol. 2, No. 9, May 5, 2003 (ISSN 1540-966X). *AC* is published 24 times per year, biweekly (except for double issues in January and August) for \$49.97 per year by The American Conservative, LLC, 1300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 120, Arlington VA, 22209. (703) 875-7600. Periodicals postage pending at Arlington, VA, and additional mailing offices. Printed in the United States of America. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 99010, Collingswood, NJ 08108-0612.

Subscription rates: \$49.97 per year (24 issues) in the U.S., \$54.97 in Canada (U.S. funds), and \$69.97 other foreign (U.S. funds). Back issues: \$6.00 (prepaid) per copy in USA, \$7.00 in Canada (U.S. funds). For subscription orders, payments, and other subscription inquiries—by mail: *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 99010, Collingswood, NJ 08108-0612. By phone: 800-579-6148 (outside the U.S./Canada call 856-488-5321). Via the web: www.amconmag.com. When ordering a subscription please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first issue and all subscription transactions. This issue went to press on April 17, 2003. Copyright 2003 *The American Conservative*. Inquiries to the editor should be sent to letters@amconmag.com.

RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING

I had the privilege of being on the editorial staff of *National Review* from 1960 to 1962 and as a young writer bonded with Trotskyite-turned-conservative James Burnham. He certainly was far too original and complicated to be classified as "the first neoconservative," so thank you, Chilton Williamson, for rescuing Burnham from the neocons' bogus revisionism (April 21).

Confirmation from Burnham's personal side: his idea of a fun vacation was to drive to the hinterlands of America where he would delight in mixing with ordinary Americans, getting their views on the issues of the day and delving into the more important nonpolitical aspects of their lives. He did this because he thought they were the strength of America, not out of some New Yorkerish curiosity about the heartland. I cannot imagine our salon neocons recharging their batteries by mixing with the provincials. DAVID FRANKE
Manassas, Va.

NADER-LAND

I was in Barnes & Noble and next to the mag I get every other month, *Worldwide Socialist Review*, was *The American Conservative*, and I remembered a right-wing friend's admonition to look for this mag. After reading the cover story, "Whose War?" (March 24), I almost fell down. Here I am, a bleeding heart, tree-hugging, Left of Left old man, agreeing with the entirety of the article! And then to agree with Eric Margolis's account of the Afghan mess was almost too much to bear. The crowning blow was when I read R.B. Calco's Adam Smith article. So where does this leave me? Well, I'm not going to subscribe, but I sure will take a peek and even buy a copy or two in the future.

FRITZ BONSALE
Port Orchard, Wash.

JUST DON'T SEE IT

My wife and I, both Orthodox Jews, reached the exact conclusion that *The American Conservative* has over attempts by the Simon Wiesenthal Center to stifle Mel Gibson's cinematic project on the crucifixion of Jesus (April 7). If Rabbi Hier and his friends object to the film, they have the simple option of not seeing it. More importantly, one has to ask why non-Christians would even care how their Christian neighbors wish to interpret their faith! As a religious Jew, my responsibility is to live a life of faith and devotion to God. No where in that equation does dictating to Mel Gibson enter in. That is something Rabbi Hier has obviously forgotten in his zeal to make himself and his superfluous organization appear useful.

DAVID L. BLATT
Chicago, Ill.

NORTH KOREAN THREAT ASSESSMENT

I read the article, "The Greater Threat," (April 7) by Eric Margolis, and it sounds like something a conspiracy theorist would write. After all the build-up in the Middle East, I wouldn't expect the president to just drop everything and turn to North Korea. We will deal with North Korea in due time. They may be a threat, but the greater threat is Iraqi terrorism.

MICHAEL SUTTON
via email

HONORABLE CEASEFIRE

I came to this country in 1980 as a Jewish émigré from Russia. I have been an admirer of Mr. Buchanan's quick wit and eloquence, but his "paleoconservative" views are unacceptable to me. There are, however, some foreign policy areas where we agree, as I did not support bombing Serbia over Kosovo and have been reluctant to see the wisdom of escalating the Iraqi crisis to the brink of

war. But once our prestige and determination were put on the line, there was no choice.

What I find astounding is Mr. Buchanan's decision—in spite of being the harshest critic of this administration and of the "driving forces" behind its policies—to stop criticism the moment the war started and wholeheartedly support our troops and our commander in chief (April 7). He is a much better man and a much bigger patriot than I was led to believe. I am sure he will continue expressing the views I disagree with when the war ends, but I will ever regard him as a statesman and a true patriot.

YURY RAPOPORT
via email

WHEN LIES GO UNCHALLENGED

I am appalled that Patrick Buchanan embraces the demagogic sophistry that one cannot attack politicians in time of war and simultaneously "support our troops." As a former U.S. Army grunt, I am perfectly capable of praying for the safety of both our troops and Iraqi civilians and excoriating the president who put both in harm's way.

A shooting war does not change the facts or morality of the war's launch, prosecution, or aftermath. The distortions and hypocrisies in support of empire continue. Unopposed, those lies will become conventional wisdom, the basis for more unjustified wars and an ever-expanding cause for hatred of and action against our homeland.

DICK THOMPSON
Joplin, Mo.

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Is Bush a Neoconservative?

Is George W. Bush a neoconservative? Has he, too, decided that we must, after taking down Saddam, destroy six or seven more Arab and Islamic regimes,

"democratize" the Mideast, and impose a *Pax Americana* from Tripoli to Tora Bora?

Is Syria next on the U.S. "hit list" for "regime change"?

My sense: George W. is more his father's son than a neocon. But we are going to find out soon. For not only have Richard Perle and ex-CIA-Director James Woolsey begun to breathe fire at Syria, so, too, have Secretary Rumsfeld and President Bush himself.

What has Syria done? According to Paul Wolfowitz of Defense, "The Syrians have been shipping killers into Iraq to try and kill Americans. ... We need to think about what our policy is towards a country that harbors terrorists or harbors war criminals."

"There will have to be change in Syria," says Wolfowitz.

Sources also report that the president, who has admonished Syria publicly, is now privately using barnyard language to describe what President Assad must be experiencing after seeing what we did in Iraq. If Bush has decided that regime change must also come to Damascus, the neoconservatives can fairly claim to have captured U.S. foreign policy whole and entire. For even under the Bush Doctrine, it is difficult to make a case that Syria should be the next target of a U.S. preemptive war.

Syria had no role in 9/11. Damascus co-operated with us in running down al-Qaeda. Nor has anyone credibly accused Syria of being behind the anthrax attacks or any recent terror attack on America. In 1990-91, Bashar Assad's father sent

4,000 soldiers to Saudi Arabia to support General Schwartzkopf's army.

Moreover, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered to return to Syria 99 percent of the Golan Heights, down to the Sea of Galilee. Though the offer was rejected, that it was made suggests that even Israel does not fear Syria. Why then should the United States?

And what grounds do we have for attacking Syria? Syria has not attacked us. She is not under UN sanctions. Nor does President Bush have authority to go to war with Damascus. The congressional resolutions under which America invaded Afghanistan and Iraq were restricted to regimes that gave aid or sanctuary to 9/11 terrorists, or to Iraq alone. Syria is beyond the reach of both resolutions.

Nor would we have any international support for an attack on Syria. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw has ruled out British support. The United Nations Security Council would oppose a war on Syria 14-1.

If America intends a war on Damascus, Bush will have to ask Congress to authorize that war, or act outside the Constitution. Not only the Arab and Islamic world but the entire world would condemn us. The isolation of the United States would be complete.

What are Syria's crimes? According to Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, and Bush, Assad let Islamic warriors pass through Syria to fight in Iraq. He sent night-vision goggles to Iraq. He may be providing safe haven to escaped Saddamites inside

Syria. He harbors terrorists, is building chemical weapons, and supports Hezbollah.

But if these are the *casus belli* for a war on Syria, we should attack Iran. Unlike Syria, Iran is believed to have been behind the terrorist attack on U.S. installations at Khobar Towers. Iran has ballistic missiles superior to Syria's and a nuclear program more advanced than that of any non-nuclear state save North Korea. Iran is the principal supporter and supplier of Hezbollah. Iran also let Islamic warriors enter Iraq. And Iran is a charter member of the president's "axis of evil." Syria is not.

Why would Syria come before Iran on America's hit list?

First, Syria, one-fourth as populous as Iran, is "doable," as Paul Wolfowitz likes to put it. Iran, three times as large as Iraq, would require a longer, bloodier war and hundreds of thousands more U.S. troops to defeat and to occupy. Moreover, a U.S. invasion of Syria would put a U.S. military presence on the border of Israel and isolate Hezbollah in Lebanon, a dream of Sharon and the neoconservatives.

My sense? Bush has had enough of war for the present. While, in his view, the demands of the War on Terror and the imperialist agenda of the War Party may have overlapped in Iraq, Bush has not signed on to any "World War IV" or *Pax Americana*. But he and his War Cabinet are content to let the neocons bark at the Arab world, as only benefit can accrue to us if these nations feel intimidated.

Prediction: Unless President Assad insanely decides to aid an *intifada* in Iraq, U.S. Marines will halt at the Syrian border. ■

[beirut calling]

Ominous Precedent

As Israel learned in Lebanon, military victory does not guarantee political success.

By Michael Desch

WITH COALITION FORCES now in control of Baghdad and much of the rest of Iraq, Saddam Hussein's odious regime is finished. As expected, the United States and its allies have achieved most of their military objectives. But will they be able to attain their overarching political goals as well? Israel's experience in Lebanon 20 years ago suggests that it is possible thoroughly to defeat one's adversary on the battlefield yet still not win the war. Similarities between Israel's Lebanon war and our war in Iraq raise concern that we might also find it difficult to turn military success into political triumph. Given the parallels, it is worth pondering Israel's disastrous experience in Lebanon as we consider the challenges the United States faces in post-Saddam Iraq.

Israel's Lebanon war and the U.S. war in Iraq are alike in at least four respects. Proponents of both wars regarded them as parts of larger plans to change fundamentally the strategic landscape in the Middle East. Advocates of each took liberties with the truth in making their cases for war. Both the Israelis and the Americans made some questionable alliances in the course of their wars. And finally, both sought to implement major

political transformations in deeply divided societies.

The ostensible motive for Israel's June 1982 invasion of Lebanon was to drive Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) forces away from Israel's border and to eliminate the threat to its northern settlements. In reality, Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, the architect of the Lebanon war, envisioned the Israeli military campaign in Lebanon as one part of his ambitious scheme to deprive the PLO of its last base in a state bordering Israel, to reduce PLO leader Yasser Ara-

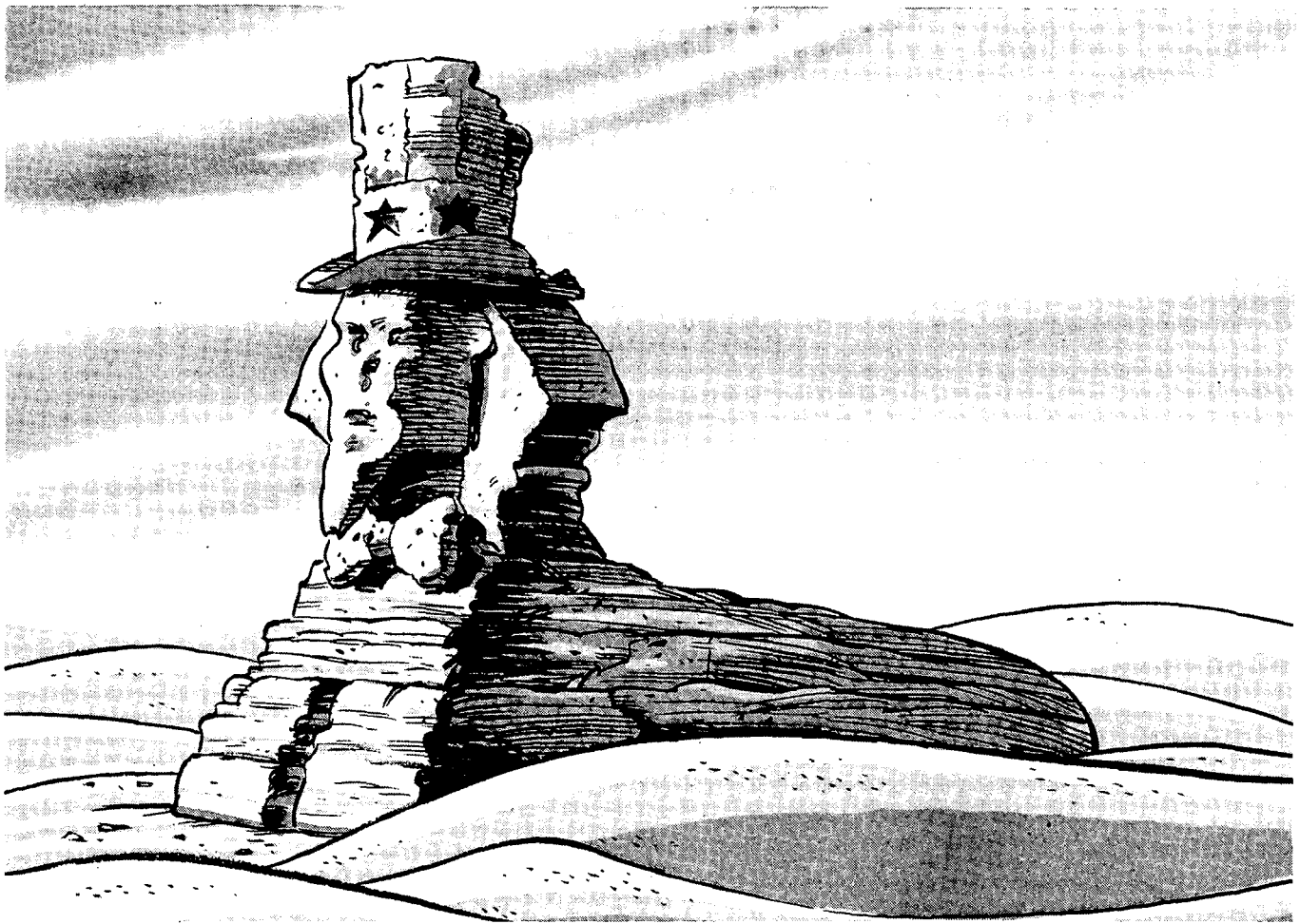
The Lebanon war began auspiciously with Israel winning a series of quick and decisive military victories. In eastern Lebanon, the Israelis drove the Syrians north of the Beirut-Damascus Highway in the process inflicting a lop-sided defeat. The air battles over the Bekka Valley cost the Syrians nearly 100 planes without the Israelis losing even one of their own. In south Lebanon, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) had little trouble routing PLO fighters and forcing the survivors to retreat in disorder to Beirut. These two campaigns were over in a

THE AIR BATTLES COST THE SYRIANS NEARLY 100 PLANES WITHOUT THE ISRAELIS LOSING EVEN ONE OF THEIR OWN.

fat's role as the symbol of Palestinian nationalism for the Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza, to topple the Hashemite kingdom in Jordan and transform it into the Palestinian homeland, to end Syrian hegemony in Lebanon, and to install a friendly Christian government in Beirut that would sign a peace treaty with the Jewish state.

matter of days with the IDF suffering only minimal casualties. Most observers thought that Israel was on the verge of winning yet another stunning military victory against the Arabs, on a par with those of 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973.

It quickly became evident, however, that the Israelis were having difficulty consolidating their initial military gains.



ALAN KING

Despite the defeats they inflicted upon the Syrians, the Israelis never drove them completely out of Lebanon. PLO forces hunkered down in Beirut, and Israeli troops were reluctant to engage them in the city, fearing prolonged and bloody fighting in its streets. Instead, the IDF and its Lebanese Christian allies surrounded West Beirut and tried to reduce Arafat's last redoubt by artillery barrages and air strikes. They inflicted little damage on PLO fighters but caused great suffering among innocent civilians.

Israel also lost the war for public opinion. As Israeli casualties mounted and it became clear that the invasion was more than just a limited operation intended to drive PLO forces out of artillery range of the northern frontier settlements, the Israeli public soon tired of the war. Daily press reports of civilian casualties in the besieged Lebanese capital turned international public opinion against Israel. Arafat and his remaining PLO fighters defied the Israelis and held out in Beirut for over two months, earn-

ing sympathy and respect from many quarters before finally agreeing to evacuate Beirut for Tunisia.

Even though they won a series of military victories, the Israelis achieved none of their larger political objectives in Lebanon. They were unable to install a pro-Israel regime. Neither did they succeed in reducing Syrian influence in Lebanon. And as a result of his defiance of the IDF during the siege of Beirut, Arafat enhanced his stature as leader of the Palestinian independence movement. In the final analysis, the war in Lebanon and the subsequent occupation cost Israel nearly 1,000 killed and over 1,200 wounded, all to no avail.

It is important for Americans to remember Israel's experience in Lebanon because it bears uncanny resemblance to our own predicament in Iraq.

Israel's Lebanon war and the U.S. war in Iraq were originally conceived as the first phases of far-reaching schemes to reorder the political situation in the Middle East. Sharon's grand plan involved

social engineering on a massive scale in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and among the Palestinians. His effort to solve all of Israel's strategic problems by installing a pro-Israel regime in Lebanon was as breathtaking in ambition as it was flawed in conception.

Iraq's role in a possible U.S. plan to change the strategic landscape of the Middle East was revealed in a July 10, 2002 RAND Corporation briefing presented to Richard Perle's Defense Policy Board, the blue-ribbon advisory panel to the Secretary of Defense. At its core was a democratic version of the domino theory that cast the toppling of Saddam Hussein and the establishment of a pro-Western, democratic regime in Iraq as the initial step in a process that would pressure Saudi Arabia and Egypt to reform and solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by forcing the Palestinian Authority to jettison Arafat and democratize. Neoconservatives like James Woolsey characterize our war against Saddam as the opening campaign in World

War IV. While administration spokesmen have been more circumspect than hawks outside government, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recent warnings to Syria and Iran sound ominously like pretexts for future action against those regimes.

Both wars were also justified in part by obfuscation, deception, and outright lies. Sharon and Likud Prime Minister Menachem Begin used the assassination attempt on Israel's Ambassador in London, Shlomo Agrov, as the pretext for their invasion of Lebanon—even though Israeli intelligence had informed them that it was carried out not by Arafat's Lebanon-based PLO but by the anti-Arafat Abu Nidal group. Sharon also concealed from the Israeli Cabinet and public the fact that his plan envisioned an Israeli drive into Lebanon well beyond the 40-kilometer buffer zone he claimed to be establishing to secure Israel's northern settlements. Sharon further deceived his colleagues in government and his fellow citizens about his intention to provoke a fight with the Syrian forces in Lebanon. Finally, he lied about his knowledge of, and even complicity in, the Christian Phalange massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla.

THIS STRATEGY OF SUBLIMINAL SUGGESTION HAS SUCCEEDED: EIGHT OUT OF TEN AMERICANS BELIEVE THERE WAS AN IRAQ/AL-QAEDA "AXIS OF EVIL" THAT JUSTIFIED THE WAR WITH IRAQ.

Hawks in the Bush administration have assiduously cultivated the myth that Saddam's regime was somehow implicated in the al-Qaeda-sponsored attacks on the United States on Sept. 11 to gain public support for war against Iraq. In so doing, they politicized the U.S. intelligence community and polluted the public debate with a series of misleading or

unfounded claims. Initially, they peddled stories that 9/11 ringleader Mohamed Atta met with an Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague before the attacks. When those claims were discredited by the Czech government, they turned tenuous connections between Baghdad and an al-Qaeda-linked fundamentalist group—Ansar al Islam—based in the Kurdish-controlled region into the "smoking gun" that Saddam and Osama bin Ladin were working hand-in-glove. Without directly imputing Iraqi involvement in the attacks, Bush administration officials regularly cite 9/11 as the rationale for disarming Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. This strategy of subliminal suggestion has succeeded: a recent *Los Angeles Times* poll found that eight out of ten Americans believed there was an Iraq/al-Qaeda "axis of evil" that justified the war with Iraq.

In both wars, the Israelis and the Americans counted upon allies of dubious reliability. Begin and Sharon both thought that Lebanon's Maronite Christian minority—particularly the Phalange Party—could serve as Israeli proxies. But after the assassination of Phalange leader Bashir Gemayel on Sept. 14, 1982, his brother Amin reneged on all his pre-

decessor's commitment to co-operate with Israel. There is plenty of evidence that even if he had lived, Bashir would not have been a very reliable ally for the Jewish state.

Hawks in the Pentagon tout the exiled Iraqi National Congress (INC) and its leader Ahmed Chalabi as sources of reliable intelligence and potential replace-

ments for Saddam and his Ba'athist Party. Neither the State Department nor the Central Intelligence Agency, however, regard the INC as either a credible source of information or a viable post-Saddam political force.

Both wars also sought to impose new regimes on fractious and deeply divided societies. Lebanon was a multi-confessional democracy made up of Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims, Druze, and Christians. Its precarious political equilibrium collapsed into civil war in the early 1970s with the arrival of large numbers of Palestinians from Jordan. The civil war drew in the Syrian Army, which could only impose a very fragile order. It is not surprising that Israel subsequently had no success in unifying Lebanon under the Christian minority.

Iraq is also a country deeply divided along religious (Sunni versus Shi'ite Muslim) and ethnic (Arab versus Kurd) lines. Saddam's ruthless dictatorship had to put down Kurdish and Shi'ite rebellions against the regime of his Sunni-Arab-dominated Ba'ath Party. Any post-Saddam regime we install will undoubtedly have to meet the challenges of managing these intractable religious and ethnic differences.

While the United States has won a major military victory in Iraq, difficult tasks remain: we must bring the war to a close quickly and with little additional bloodshed, keep Iraq's restive ethnic groups from killing each other or breaking away, establish a stable democratic regime in Baghdad, and preserve regional stability. To accomplish even a few of these tasks will be a challenge.

Large numbers of Iraqi soldiers—Republican Guard, Special Republican Guard, Fedayeen Saddam, and members of the various security services—remain at large. These Iraqis were no match for coalition forces in conventional combat in the open desert. They demonstrated, though, that by waging guerrilla warfare

in the cities of Umm Qasr, Nasariyah, Najaf, Karbala, and Basra they could drag out the conflict and inflict casualties. Should large numbers continue to resist in Baghdad or other parts of the country, they could further prolong the war and raise its human toll on both sides. The coalition has won a remarkable victory, but more fighting may be ahead.

The ethnic mix in Iraq is volatile. The Kurds have long suffered under Arab oppression and are not likely to forgive and forget. They are also divided into competing factions that did not get along well before the war and are unlikely to resolve their differences any time soon. The Sunni and Shi'ite Arabs have such a long history of bitter conflict that many scores will undoubtedly be settled in the coming weeks and months. Preventing ethnic conflict and secession in post-Saddam Iraq will be difficult.

There is no credible democratic political movement inside Iraq that we can turn power over to any time soon. The external Iraqi opposition is divided and lacks a constituency in the country. Moreover, the prospects for establishing a stable democratic regime in Iraq are poor: the country has few, if any, of the economic, political, and cultural prerequisites for the emergence of a stable democratic political system.

Finally, Iraq's borders are rife with potential conflicts. Even before the war the ethnic politics of Iraq complicated the war effort. The Turks refused to let U.S. forces operate from their territory unless the United States allowed them to deploy troops in the Kurdish region of Iraq to ensure that Kurdish separatism did not spill over the border into Turkey. Both Syria and Iran are wary of the coalition's future intentions and may support anti-American factions in Iraq to keep us bogged down there.

Given the magnitude of the challenges we face in post-Saddam Iraq, we

may find that fighting the war was easier than winning the peace. If we want to avoid Israel's 1982 fate in our current war in Iraq, we need to take to heart certain lessons from its political failure in Lebanon.

Israel suffered more casualties in Lebanon after the PLO departed than it did during the war. Just because the

JUST AS THE ISRAELIS DISCOVERED THAT MILITARY VICTORY IN LEBANON DID NOT SOLVE THE REST OF THEIR SECURITY PROBLEMS, WE NEED TO REALIZE THAT OUR MILITARY VICTORY IN IRAQ WILL BE NO PANACEA.

Iraqi Army and Republican Guard have been defeated does not mean we will not continue to face resistance from paramilitaries and other irregulars. The pro-Saddam complexion of these forces will probably fade but could be replaced with a criminal or warlord orientation. Suicide bombing, the weapon of choice for weaker powers in the Middle East, made its debut against the Israelis in Lebanon. U.S. forces have already been attacked in this way and should expect more of it in the future.

Israel foundered in Lebanon in part because Sharon and Begin allied with the Maronites against the advice of many of their intelligence advisors and other experts on Lebanon. We would be unwise to depend upon unreliable allies like the Iraqi National Congress. They were of little value to us before the war, and there is scant reason to think that they will become any more reliable in the future.

Just as the Israelis discovered that military victory in Lebanon did not solve the rest of their security problems, we need to realize that our military victory in Iraq will be no panacea. The biggest problem the United States faces in the region is not the corrupt regimes in moderate, pro-U.S. Arab states like Egypt or

Saudi Arabia but the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We should focus on resolving it through the prompt implementation of the "road map."

The Israelis overestimated their ability to reshape Lebanon's domestic political system in their favor. Iraq's political soil is not fertile, and so it is unlikely that the seeds of democracy and stability we

plant will grow easily. We need to be realistic about the prospects for nation-building and other forms of international social engineering in Iraq.

Finally, the Israelis were welcomed by the Lebanese Shi'ites as liberators in June but reviled as oppressors by September 1982. We should not make the mistake of believing that just because Iraqis hate Saddam, they will love us. Nationalism and self-determination are powerful ideological forces in the Middle East, as they are around the world. Conquerors, especially those bringing freedom, are often welcomed, but liberators can quickly become hated occupiers. We need to be careful not to overstay our welcome in Iraq.

Niccolò Machiavelli wrote 500 years ago in *The Prince*, "There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things." The Israelis learned this the hard way in Lebanon. The United States may discover the same thing in Iraq. ■

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[james zogby]

An Arab-American Perspective

The Israeli-Palestinian question is still paramount.

Shortly before the war began, AC spoke with Dr. James Zogby, president and founder of the Arab-American Institute, a Washington-based organization devoted to making the views of Arab-Americans resonate more strongly in American politics. With the U.S. now committed to indefinite military involvement in the Middle East that will affect American ties with the Arab world at every level, it seemed appropriate to hear from one of the country's most prominent Arab-Americans.

After the Oslo Peace Accords were signed in 1993, Zogby was asked by Vice President Gore to head Builders for Peace, a private partnership promoting economic development on the West Bank. In 1994, Zogby, along with former Congressman Mel Levine (D-Calif.), led the U.S. delegation to the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement in Cairo. Following are excerpts from our conversation:

AC: What do you think are the likely consequences of war? Will it unlock the door to democracy in the Arab world and be some springtime for peoples of the Middle East?

Zogby: I call that the neoconservative infantile fantasy. But theirs is not the only movement with infantile fantasies. Trostkyism was like that. Maoism was like that. Anarchism was like that. Religious fundamentalism is like that. The

notion that out of upheaval good things fall in place is the apocalyptic vision of good spontaneously coming out of chaos. I've always thought that we need to put these people on a couch and take notes.

Democracy is never formed out of a war. There have to be pre-conditions for democracy. In fact, I think the war's more likely outcome is that some countries in the Middle East, allies of ours, will become more repressive because their people will internalize the anger brought on by the war, and in order to stabilize the situation, the governments will have to crack down more. And sadly, we will probably support that crackdown.

AC: Let's assume the U.S. wins easily. Do you think that would open possibilities to restart the Israel-Palestinian peace talks?

Zogby: I think our allies in the region are worried that what we are going to do is establish military hegemony and leave them with the consequences. The question is are we going to stick around as all of these feuds begin, as all of these problems unfold, as all of these countries become destabilized? Can we have one foot in Afghanistan? One foot in Iraq? One foot in Pakistan and Jordan and maybe in the Gulf, in the North with Turkey and the Kurds, and still focus on the Israeli-Palestinian issue?

AC: What ramifications or consequences do you see this having on the peace process?

Zogby: There is no peace process anymore. This administration abandoned it early on and let the parties move on this downward spiral to unending violence that has poisoned the well on both sides. American leadership is nowhere to be found.

When the explosions began last year, the president had an opportunity and gave a speech that laid out some conditions to both sides: Sharon must do this and Arafat must do that. But two weeks later, after hearing public protests from Gary Bauer, Bill Bennett, and Ralph Reed, the president got scared off. To protect his base vote, he announced two weeks later that Sharon is a man of peace, and Arafat has got to go.

The result is that Sharon has been emboldened, Arafat has been discredited, and the policy that Likud laid out five years ago has practically been implemented. There is no Palestinian Authority on the ground. The only thing that remains is that while the Israelis have virtually devastated the West Bank and its infrastructure and Gaza and its infrastructure, they have not fully occupied the cities for a callous reason: they don't want to be paying for the civil administration. So what they've done is dig trenches, put their troops around them, periodically make entrances and demol-

ish more houses and create more havoc while absolving themselves of the responsibility of providing for human needs.

AC: About a year ago you wrote that if it were possible for the Palestinians to change tactics in a kind of Gandhian-Martin-Luther-King direction and use the tools of civil disobedience and public protest, that would probably be more effective for them both internally and in world opinion than suicide bombings. Do you think the social conditions on the West Bank and Gaza have so deteriorated that kind of strategy is no longer possible?

Zogby: To understand the conditions that these people have lived under for the last 35-40 years is to understand that when the first *intifada* broke out, it was an extraordinary movement, and the hope that was created by Oslo transformed opinion literally overnight in the territories. People were willing to put aside their pain.

I remember, three days after Oslo was signed, I had one of the architects of Oslo on my TV show, and the question came up about violence. I asked, "What are you going to do when the bombs start?" And he said, "You know, if this works, and I hope it does, and I believe it will, two years from now our young people are going to have jobs, and our cities will be being built." (They have no infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza because Israel had done nothing to develop those territories for three decades.) He then went on to say that with that in place and the future Palestinian state being shaped before their very eyes, when the bombs start, the people will turn to the Authority and say stop them because they threaten to take everything we want.

He was on my show two years almost to the day later, and a bomb had gone off

in Tel Aviv, and there was a picture of 25,000 young men in Gaza shaking their fists in support of the bombers. And I said, "What happened?" He said, "Let's go through the numbers: unemployment is double today what it was when peace was signed. Settlement size has increased 50 percent since peace was signed. Roads are being built throughout the West Bank physically dividing towns from one another, connecting settlers to Israel proper, and orchards are being uprooted, etc. The infrastructure that is being built is that of continued occupation, and people are looking at us and saying, what have you done? We are poorer. We have fewer jobs. We have less land and less hope. And so the bombers are winning and the Authority has nothing to offer." Ten years later, 70 percent unemployment, 70 percent poverty, and the employment that exists is all internal. It is people selling their poverty to each other. With that despair, and in that despair, has developed a cult of suicide. If we look at it and understand it as in fact a social movement, we'll see how difficult and tragic this consensus has become.

One lesson I learned in comparative

IF YOU READ OSLO CAREFULLY, IT WAS NOT A ROAD MAP TO PEACE. IT WAS, IN EFFECT, A CRY FOR HELP.

religion is that basically we are one species. People are no different. What is different are the circumstances in which they develop. Young people in the West Bank and Gaza, like young people here, like young people everywhere, think of their futures. They want to bring home to their parents things that make their parents proud. My children get married, have grandchildren, have careers and futures, and that is what kids in the West Bank want as well. When you have no future, when you have no prospect of a job, no prospect therefore of marriage

and children, what has come to replace all of that, in a pathetic and evil way, is killing yourself and bringing honor to the family through suicide and taking some of the enemy with you. How do you unwind that? The only way is to create hope by radically transforming the circumstances on the ground.

That will not come from the Sharon government. The Palestinian Authority cannot do it. Therefore, what the world has to look to is an external factor, and the only one available is the United States of America. But every step along the way we have denied ourselves the opportunity to play that role.

AC: Your answer, because it goes back to the first two years after Oslo was signed, seems to imply that it was flawed—that even as conceived by Rabin and Peres, it was flawed. That seems to coincide with Edward Said's criticism of it.

Zogby: No, and I disagreed with Edward because I believed that Oslo had the prospect of making peace. The failure of Oslo was the failure of the United States because if you read Oslo carefully, it was

not a road map to peace. It was two sides coming together saying we can go so far. We recognize each other's right to exist with legitimate rights. What we can't do is go any further. It was, in effect, a cry for help.

What America did, at that point, was that the president's advisors effected the same thing as a marriage counselor who, having a couple come to him and say, "We've been fighting for 20 years and know we need help," responds to them by saying, "Why don't you stay here in the room and work this out. I'll



be in the next room, and I hope you make progress."

The notion coming from [President Clinton's top Mideast negotiator] Dennis Ross and others was that the parties have to work this out themselves, and all we can do is sit on the sidelines. Partly borne of domestic politics, partly borne of a sense that the asymmetry that existed between Israel and the Palestinians would best play out with Israel continuing to drive it, they ignored the reality that Israel wanted at that point to do the right thing, and the Palestinians wanted to do the right thing, but neither leadership had the ability to do it given the weakness of the hold over their constituencies.

Rabin could not stop settlement-building and could not make the concessions he needed to make. And Arafat couldn't be the sheriff that Rabin needed him to be either. What needed to happen early on was for the United States to step in and say, here is what you agreed to, here is the outcome we are going to push for, and here are the steps we are going to take. Both sides were ready.

Remember the old Mennen commercial? Where the guys slapped themselves and said, "Thanks, I needed that." What both sides needed then was a slap. Historically, only the Palestinians have gotten the slap, and the Israelis have been coddled. That has not been in Israel's interest nor has it been in the Palestinians' interest.

Even as late as Camp David, I was pushing President Clinton to put his plan on the table first and spend a year selling it. Because I went with him to Gaza and Bethlehem and Jerusalem in 1998, I saw his ability to sell peace to both sides. Instead, listening to the other crowd around him, he said, let's let Barak do it. Barak came in, put his plan on the table, and said, "This is it. Take it or leave it." Arafat wasn't going to deal with that. The arrogance of Barak and the fact that his plan was not as attractive as it got sold in the narrative that has been accepted here—95 percent, which if you let people blather on long enough becomes the whole thing. It was in reality only about 95 percent of 80 percent of the West Bank. The rest was largely going to stay in Israel's hands, including: the Jordan Valley, the huge swath around Jerusalem, and a few blocs of settlements. The West Bank was going to be carved up into little pieces with no free access or egress to the outside world. When Clinton called me into the Oval Office at one point and said, "This is it, what do you think?" I said, "Mr. President as long as there are checkpoints, there are flashpoints. As long as Palestinians have no freedom to move in and out of Jordan or Egypt and do business and commerce with their neighbors and have to always go through Israeli checkpoints to do that, there is not going to be peace."

AC: Wouldn't it have been wise for the PA and Arafat to put forward a counter-proposal?

Zogby: They did. Part of the narrative that has been accepted by the conventional wisdom here ignores that. But there was a Palestinian plan on the table at the time, and there were Palestinian plans all the way up to Taba. This process didn't stop at Camp David; it continued. There were Palestinian plans that

were offered. How did we get to the point that we got if not for the fact that they were actively negotiating neighborhoods in Jerusalem and plans for what we were going to do with the various competing sovereignties over the city of Jerusalem if the Palestinians weren't talking?

What Arafat, in effect, did was say, "You've done your bit and I'm doing mine." The Arafat plan was '67 borders with some modifications but said there had to be discussion about the refugees. And the Israelis refused to talk refugees at all. Frankly, what the Palestinians were at least hoping for as a minimum was accepting the right of return with a negotiation over how to implement the right. When the Israelis said, we won't talk about it at all, they were the ones who didn't put a counter-plan in. This is not just about acres and orders. When the Israeli argument was, we won't surrender water, we won't surrender the Jordan Valley, we won't surrender the areas around Jerusalem, and we are not even talking about refugees, I think that ...

Look, Clinton had promised me something after Peres lost and he went back on his promise. I remember meeting him after Peres lost the election and we said that what Peres did in Lebanon cost him that election. It was 80 percent of the Arab vote staying home that cost him the election. Clinton said, "I know I made a mistake. I was trying to help the guy get elected. That is why I didn't criticize him. I won't do that again." But that is exactly what he did with Barak. He was trying to help Barak get elected, and so began to create and spin the narrative about Barak's generous offer. The problem is that the myth of the "generous offer" got so locked in place that everyone ended up believing it. Barak was deified, Arafat was demonized, and people lost all sense of what really happened at Camp David. ■

[here come the hashemites]

Wolfowitz of Arabia

America's blueprint for a new Iraqi government looks suspiciously like the plan Britain tried after the First World War.

By Richard Cummings

FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, two people figured prominently in Britain's plans for the Middle East. There was Chaim Weizmann, who in 1917 had been elected President of the British Zionist Federation, and there was Hussein ibn Ali, Sherif and Emir of Mecca and later, King of the Hejaz.

Weizmann was close to British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, who as a lawyer had represented the Zionists. Not so coincidentally, Lord Alfred Balfour, Lloyd George's Foreign Minister, proclaimed the Balfour Declaration, also in 1917, promising the Jews a homeland in Palestine, a former Ottoman province turned over to Britain by the League of Nations through a mandate. Lest anyone claim that this was for fees paid to Lloyd George as the lawyer for Weizmann's organization, Lloyd George circulated the story that he had given the Balfour Declaration in appreciation for Weizmann's contribution to the war effort. Weizmann, a chemist, had discovered the process to extract acetone, a significant ingredient in the manufacture of explosives, from maize, then donated the formula to the British government. But Lloyd George's account was a self-serving distortion.

Hussein of Mecca was a member of the illustrious House of Hashem, which claimed to be direct descendents of the Prophet Muhammad and had led the Arab revolt against the Turks during World War I (with help from Lawrence of Arabia). But when the war was over, he failed to win the fight with Ibn Saud for control of Arabia, also a former Ottoman province. Captured by Ibn Saud, Hussein lost power but won a consolation prize when Churchill created Iraq out of Ottoman territories and proclaimed Hussein's son, Feisal, its king. Through this puppet monarchy, Britain intended to retain control of Iraq and its natural resources. Feisal was also pro-Jewish and appointed numerous Jewish Iraqis to high administrative positions, including that of economics minister. Feisal was useful in other ways as well. In a country deeply divided between the two branches of Islam—Sunni and Shi'ite—Feisal was the perfect unifier on paper. A Sunni, he was descended from Muhammad, and the Shi'ites believed that the true leaders of Islam were not the Caliphs but the descendents of Muhammad, whom they called the Imams. They revered the House of Hashem for this reason. It was therefore possible for Feisal to be both the Caliph to the Sunnis and

the true Imam to the Shi'ites. All he had to do was shut up and do what the British told him.

Churchill's idea was simple. In exchange for giving Feisal the throne of Iraq, Feisal would support a Jewish state in Palestine. And in return for giving the Zionists a homeland in Palestine, they would help out Feisal. Years later, a scheme was hatched whereby the Iraqis would send their Jews by military truck through the desert in Jordan to Israel, and the Israelis would send a large number of the Palestinians they were in the process of evicting to Iraq, with a mutual confiscation of property. It never came to pass, and the idea faded until the coming of Viceroy Wolfowitz of Baghdad.

In the world of postwar Iraq, Paul Wolfowitz looms large. He has assembled a postwar government of Americans in Kuwait, ready to take over Iraq and govern it during an "interim period" of indeterminate length until a legitimate Iraqi government "emerges"—whatever that means. And to be eligible to make it into this colonial government, it is widely accepted that one must be one of "Wolfie's People," his own private entourage of subservient sycophants to a man driven by a mission to create an Iraq that tilts towards Israel and, Wol-

fowitz insists, is, at least superficially, democratic. As Disraeli famously made Queen Victoria the Empress of India, for which she remained loyal to him through thick and thin, so Wolfie will make George W. Bush the Emperor of Iraq, for which he will reward him handsomely, perhaps making him the next Secretary of State, after Powell leaves at the beginning of the second term.

Serving as head of non-military operations in Iraq will be retired Maj. Gen. Jay Garner, whose operation has the Orwel-

unilaterally declared World War IV (World War III being the Cold War), in which Iraq is just the beginning, to be followed by the sorting out of Iran, Syria, and North Korea, not to mention al-Qaeda and assorted other Islamic extremist terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad.

A couple of other contenders are worth mentioning. There is Timothy Carney, the ex-ambassador to the Sudan, to run the Baghdad Ministry of Industry, who is liked by Wolfie but is resented by the

tions will never be able to agree on a government. Ahmad Chalabi of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), with his 700 fighters, is prepared to form a provisional government but is dismissed by American intelligence. The Shi'ite religious leader, Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim is departing Iran with his Iran-backed group known as SCIRI, which has as many as 15,000 paramilitaries. Al-Hakim's group is fundamentalist Muslim and pro-Iranian. Throw in the Kurds and you have a prescription for civil war. This is a potential nightmare for Wolfie.

Wolfowitz looks into his crystal ball and sees something. It is the old Iraqi royal family, ousted by the 1958 coup that eventually brought Saddam Hussein to power, waiting in the wings, particularly Sherif Ali bin al-Hussein, a cousin of the late Iraqi king. By restoring the Hashemites, an objective supported by King Abdullah of Jordan, a Hashemite (the British put them on that throne as well), Wolfie can kill many birds with one stone. The Shi'ite population of southern Lebanon currently supports Hezbollah, which is supported by both Syria, with its territorial ambitions (its army occupies Lebanon), and Iran. But these Shi'ites, as do those in Iraq, still venerate the House of Hashem because it is the Prophet's family. The royal family is Sunni, so it will have Sunni support. It is trusted by the Kurds and tilts towards Israel, making it, on paper, perfect—sort of.

The Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 provides funds for the various Iraqi opposition groups, and money could start flowing, big time, to the royals under Wolfie's regime. In a thousand and one nights and after a magic carpet ride to the strains of Scheherazade, we could be back to 1917. Monarchy isn't exactly democracy but, oh well, you can't have everything. Such is faith—or neocon dreaming. ■

Richard Cummings writes and lectures on international affairs.

IN A THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS AND AFTER A **MAGIC CARPET RIDE TO THE STRAINS OF SCHEHERAZADE, WE COULD BE BACK TO 1917.**

lian title of "Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance." Garner is a defense contractor on leave from L-3 Communications, who had been in charge of protecting the Kurds in Northern Iraq during the last war in the Persian Gulf. Of course, America pulled out, and thousands of the Kurds were exterminated, but Garner is now there for the duration. The only extermination will be of the Iraqis who don't join the team. They will be called "war criminals" and tried exclusively by the American military, not by an international tribunal.

In addition to Garner, there will be the "true believers," starting with Robert Reilly, who headed the Voice of America and who can be expected to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqis by exposing them to Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera videos. And high up on the list is also James Woolsey, known at Langley as "Jimmy the Brief" for his short tenure as Clinton's head of CIA, during which the president met with him approximately three times. He is to be Minister of Information, a highly sensitive and important position, for which he has strong Pentagon backing. Woosley has

Pentagon because he had the temerity to criticize the intelligence failures in the Sudan that led the United States to make disastrous policy decisions in the Islamic world. Later, as ambassador to Haiti, Carney questioned whether the use of force could guarantee democracy. He serves on the Board of Advisors to the Haiti Democracy Project. If force hasn't brought about democracy in tiny Haiti, can it possibly do so in a deeply divided, California-size Iraq? Stay tuned.

There is also the Queen of Baghdad, Barbara Bodine, the ex-ambassador to Yemen, who is not exactly loved by the Pentagon but who appeals to Wolfie because she has condemned the stereotyping of Arabs and Muslims. She is distrusted because, as ambassador to Yemen, she thwarted the FBI counterintelligence investigation of the bombing of the Cole because the FBI guys came in with a lot of armed soldiers and offended Yemeni officials. She actually survived a terrorist hijacking but is none the worse for wear and has already picked out her villa in Baghdad, of which she will be the mayor in all but name.

As Wolfie sees it, the various Iraqi fac-

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, R.I.P.

The late New York Senator on the implications of the first Arab-American war

The recent outpouring of affection for Daniel Patrick Moynihan was more heartfelt than for many Washington figures of comparable stature. But there has not been as much comment as there might have been on his decidedly contrarian nature, though this may have been his most defining characteristic. During the heyday of the civil rights movement, Moynihan famously homed in on the emerging problems of the black family; during the American retreat from globalism that followed Watergate and defeat in Vietnam, he advocated a robust defense of Western values in the United Nations; with Reaganism becoming ascendant, he tacked back again towards the center and the Left, but in the wake of the Democrats' triumph in 1992 was an important opponent of Hillary Clinton's health care reforms. If there was a groundswell of unconsidered political opinion in any direction, Moynihan was likely to be found pointing out its weaknesses.

Like many senators, his off-the-record views were refreshingly void of political correctness. I remember once accompanying him in the elevator down from an editorial board meeting at the NY Post and asking him if he thought I was making a mistake in my efforts to keep the issue of immigration reform alive and front and center. "Absolutely not" he said, followed by some comments that were quite different from what he had said on the record upstairs. I left heartened and more convinced than ever that I was correct in pushing an issue the conservative political establishment wanted buried.

Because he had been a cold warrior and eloquent foe of the more over-the-top anti-Zionist and anti-Western utterances of the United Nations General Assembly, his turn against neoconservative hawkishness resonated deeply. So did his opposition to the first Gulf War, which fatefully brought American armies into the Middle East with consequences that are now plain and will haunt us for decades. His powerful speech on the eve of Gulf War I—excerpted below—was typical Moynihan, alert to how history shapes the present and ready to think for himself—qualities far too rare in today's leaders.

—Scott McConnell

**Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan
Jan. 10, 1991**

FROM 1914 TO 1989, there was a 75-year "war" which inevitably changed attitudes and institutions. In our hearings we were looking at the attitudes and institutions that had changed, and the ways in which they did. I chaired the hearings, so I took the opportunity to organize our inquiry around an extraordinary speech, which Woodrow Wilson gave in St. Louis, Mo., on Sept. 5, 1919. It was on that trip around the country, pleading for public support to influence the Senate to consent to the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles, which contained the League of Nations covenant. Wilson was asking for that support. He was 20 days from Pueblo, Colo., where he would collapse. It would be, in effect, the end of his presidency.

I see the Senator representing St.

Louis is on the floor, and I think the senior Senator from Missouri would recognize that Wilson's remarks had about them the quality of prophesy: it was the end of his life. He was trying to tell Americans what he would leave behind him, what would happen if we did not establish a world order where there was law, where there were procedures, where peace was enforced. And if we did not, what would come instead.

He said, "Very well, then. If we must stand apart and be the hostile rivals of the rest of the world, we must do something else: We must be physically ready for anything to come. We must have a great standing army. We must see to it that every man in American is trained in arms, and we must see to it that there are munitions and gas enough for an army. And that means a mobilized nation; that they are not only laid up in store, but that they are kept up to date; that they are ready to use tomorrow; that we are a nation in arms."

Then he said, "What would a nation in arms be? Well you know, you have to think of the President of the United States not as the chief counselor of the Nation, elected for little while, but as the man meant constantly and every day to be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, ready to order it to any part of the world with a threat of war, as a menace to his own people."

Then he said, "And you cannot do that under free debate; you can't do that under public counsel. Plans must be kept secret. Knowledge must be accumulated by a system which we have condemned, because we call it a spying

system. The more polite call it a system of intelligence."

Then he went on a little further to say, in effect, how this world would shape itself up into one of continuing crises. And so, Mr. President, in that speech in St. Louis, which, as I say, has a prophetic quality which haunts one to this day, Woodrow Wilson said that we would see the emergence of a system of Government in which the President had become Commander in Chief, head of the Armed Forces. That did happen. And nothing is more extraordinary evidence of it having happened than the assertions we have heard in the past month after the lurching from a defensive, deterrent position, which we responded to very well, into an offensive position on November 8. That was a decision reached in secret. It suddenly turned what had been a collective security operation with the complete support of the country and the world into an offensive military crisis situation.

Wilson's prediction in action, the President as Commander in Chief, secretly moving in an atmosphere of ongoing permanent, Orwellian crisis, asserting that this is entirely in his own hands. ...

In the aftermath of the Cold War, what we find is a kind of time warp in which we are acting in an old mode in response to a new situation.

I find it extraordinary, for example, that the President should so personalize the encounter with this particular thug in Baghdad: the most recent thug in Baghdad, not the last by any means. There will be others. It is in that mode that we are in a bipolar permanent crisis with the enemy. It used to be totalitarian, Leninist, communism. Without a moment's pause almost, we shifted the enemy to this person at the head of this insignificant, flawed country whose boundaries were drawn in 1925 in a tent by an English colonial official, an artifact of the Treaty of Sevres... ■

Strip Malls Across the Fruited Plain

When landscape is destroyed, culture is imperiled.

By Arthur Versluis

I GREW UP ON, and still help on, our family's farm on the west side of Grand Rapids, Mich. This past year, the last hundred acres of farmland within the confines of the city, just down the highway from our fruit stand, was destroyed to make way for a cheap subdivision. Now ours is the only farm left even partially within the city limits.

As Russell Kirk, who lived two counties north of us, wrote, "This brutal destruction ... of the very landscape, in this age of the bulldozer, constitutes a belligerent repudiation of what we call tradition. It is a rejection of our civilized past—and a rejection out of which sharp characters may make a good deal of money."

While the destruction of the natural world may be embraced by neoconservative "sharp characters," such destruction cannot be accepted by the traditional conservative. If one affirms and seeks to preserve what enriches human life, then it is not possible to endorse the ruin of the natural world. Indeed, historically as well as etymologically, conservatism and conservation go hand in hand. What is a conservative if not one who seeks to conserve?

The traditional conservative identifies with a particular place, a particular family, a particular region and landscape. The very idea of conserving what has come to us from the past assumes that something *has* come to us from the past and that something has to be actual—a

place, language, cultural inheritance, a particular forest, lake, orchard, vista. One's fundamental impulse is to preserve what is actual, what has meaning and gives meaning.

By contrast, the ideologue affirms what is abstract. The corporate ideologue is concerned with abstract profit. If that pursuit blows up mountains, lets debris clog rivers, and digs out the exposed coal and minerals, so be it. Consider Communist China's massive Three Gorges dam project, the largest in the world. When such a project destroys farmland and ruins the ecosystem, causes massive flooding and immense human suffering, the ideologue says this does not matter; what matters is the ideology of the state that justifies it. Or again, consider the Islamic religious ideologue who, as a terrorist, is willing to blow up a nuclear reactor and ruin a countryside to punish infidels and, as he thinks, to enter an abstract future paradise by dynamiting the present. The impulses and self-justifications here are disturbingly similar: abstract good justifies destruction of the immediate.

Traditional conservatism is significantly different from what has come to be known as environmentalism, even though it shares many of the same aspirations. Environmentalism includes perspectives from the ecological vandalism of the Earth Liberation Front to the activism of Greenpeace to corporate-sponsored ecotourism. But nearly all of

these movements have at their center an emphasis on preserving the natural world more or less free from human intervention or use. To preserve wilderness is without question a natural part of traditional conservatism, but the emphasis in traditional conservatism is more on the human relationship to the land.

Historically, American traditional conservatives drew upon Thomas Jefferson's legacy of encouraging an agrarian republic, and this reflects the fundamental conservative impulse toward the preservation of culture and land in relationship to each other. Arguably the most important American traditional conservative works of the 20th century were the two Southern Agrarian collections entitled *I'll Take My Stand* and *Who Owns America?*, which featured essays by such seminal figures as Herbert Agar, Andrew Lytle, Frank Owsley, John Crowe Ransom, and Allen Tate.

The Southern Agrarians were arguing chiefly against corporate hegemony and in favor of the family farm and of living culture. In the first essay in *I'll Take My Stand*, John Crowe Ransom wrote,

Ambitious men fight, first of all, against nature; they propose to put nature under their heel; this is the dream of scientists burrowing in their cells, and then of the industrial men who beg of their secret knowledge and go out to trouble the earth. ... It seems wiser to be moderate in our expectations of nature, and respectful; and out of so simple a thing as respect for the physical earth and its teeming life comes a primary joy, which is an inexhaustible source of arts and religions and philosophies.

Striking in this passage is Ransom's hostility to the industrialist dogma of perpetual progress and his emphasis on respect for the earth and for life.

The Southern Agrarians were in a unique position to see and oppose corporate creep because they came from a region with cultural identity, traditions, and agrarian roots. The Agrarians wanted to preserve family farms for the same reasons that Jefferson did, but above all they recognized the immense importance of developing and maintaining a human culture that corresponded to and augmented the landscape rather than ruining it. The Agrarian vision was of an American republic that cherished its regional variety and encouraged responsible local governance.

RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISM IS THE **LAST DESPERATE CRY** OF THOSE WHO WISH TO **PRESERVE AT LEAST SOMETHING OF NATURE** FROM HUMAN DEPREDATION.

The primary insight of the traditional conservative regarding conservation is that just as corporate-industrialist hegemony eliminates individual freedom, destroys the landscape, and wrecks culture, an agrarian republic is the surest check against these because it is the surest preservation of culture, without which life is leached of meaning. Culture, in all its forms—art, literature, philosophy, and above all religion—is how we find relevance in our lives. Without culture (in the classic meaning of the word), as the poet Yeats recognized, things fall apart, the center does not hold, and mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. Culture is what draws people to a region and the reason that they love it; it is the bond between humanity and landscape and the divine by which human life in a particular place has lasting significance.

In this respect, environmentalism is the result of a society in which culture has so bled away that only the final and extreme principle of preserving wilderness is left. Radical environmentalism is

the last desperate cry of those who wish to preserve at least something of nature from human depredation.

Historically, there are two reasons that conservatives have been antagonistic toward environmentalists. First is the confusion of corporatism with conservatism, for as soon as conservatism became allied with libertarianism and opposed government regulation of corporations, it abandoned its roots in rural and small-business America and became something akin to an arm of the Chamber of Commerce with considerable hostility toward those who insist

that a representative republic must protect the good of people, not conglomerates. Second is the natural conservative dislike of centralized government, required for the enforcement of laws protecting land, water, and air.

But the truth is, from a traditional conservative perspective, federal and state governments have one primary function that cannot be fulfilled as effectively or fairly by any other organization: protection. The chief function of government is to protect its citizens from foreign invasion or interference and from domestic predators who, absent the policing power of government, would prey upon citizens' possessions or destroy their common inheritance. All other government functions are ancillary at best.

The libertarian and neoconservative view is that the "free market" and corporations unfettered from inconvenient regulation would somehow arrive at a balance that protects the natural world and citizens' health, but in fact even a modicum of experience shows that this is nonsense. A corporation exists prima-

rily to avoid individual moral responsibility or legal liability, so without the external check of government-enforced accountability, corporations will do whatever garners the most profit the fastest.

If the traditional conservative's ideal *polis* suddenly came into being, there would in fact be very little need for centralized government's environmental regulation because that regulation exists largely to counterbalance the centralized power of corporations. Were one suddenly in a world of family farms, small businesses, regional culture, and a rich communal and cultural life with a religious center, one would not need federal agencies to police environmental laws: the capacity and appetite for massive destruction of the natural world or human

life simply would not be present. On a decentralized local level, without the pressure of an artificially induced population increase through immigration, and without the inhuman greed fostered by corporate economism, caring for the natural world is simply a basic human instinct.

That this is so is borne out in every landscape that has existed largely unplundered since human settlement. I stayed for a week one summer in a castle in Provence, and the surrounding landscape was little changed from when it was a troubadour's stronghold in the 13th century. To preserve the castle and the landscape for all those centuries required no federal agency, only the conservation of the landscape's beauty and meaning over the centuries by the people who were born there and loved the place.

Alas, the United States has no such history of conserving ancestral lands. We have numerous parks and preserves, but our record of conserving agricultural and private open land is execrable. The 20th century saw the continuous loss of farmers and the obliteration of small farms, the decline in open and forested land near cities, and the higgeldy-piggeldy sprawl across the countryside of suburbs and exurbs. Rare indeed is the family that owns acreage for more than a generation. As a result, the United States has become a nation of resident aliens located in placeless places with strip malls and cookie-cutter subdivisions that resemble anywhere—everywhere—else in the country.

My family has worked the same orchards and fields in Michigan since the 19th century, but this became increasingly difficult as the 20th century turned into the 21st. The advent of global free trade meant China could export its cheap apple juice via multinational corporations, undercutting American

farmers and dragging the price of our fruit far below the cost of production. What is more, American fruit co-operatives and packing and juice-producing companies have been driven out of business so that American farmers no longer have any venue to sell their fruit. Families that had farmed hundreds of acres of orchards since the 19th century, good farmers, have been driven out of business, and in the wake of their loss come subdivisions and shopping centers.

The conservation of land cannot be separated from the conservation of whatever is left of a local culture. Culture emerges out of a particular landscape, and when that landscape is destroyed by consumerism in which everything is rendered uniform and sterile, then culture itself is obliterated. We have reached a point now where cultures of every variety are rendered nearly extinct because the culture has no natural setting in which to reside. There remain a few oases here and there, like Pennsylvania Dutch country, but even there the monosociety undermines it by converting the culture into a tourist spectacle, an object for consumption.

If American conservatism is to have a vital future, it must recognize its roots in the land itself. There is nothing conservative in policies that destroy farming families to line the pockets of globalist corporate executives. The sooner that traditional conservatives and environmentalists realize that they have at least one aim in common—conservation of agricultural and wild land in order to maintain the quality of American life and culture—the sooner a political coalition can emerge that will challenge the globalist exploitation and destruction of the natural world. ■

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Arts & Letters

FILM

[Phone Booth]

Last American Pay Phone

By Steve Sailer

SPRING MAY HAVE SPRUNG, but this remains a dark season for moviegoers. During most other times of the year, the small thriller "Phone Booth" could be overlooked without much loss. Yet, here in the shank of the movie year, between December's surfeit of Oscar hopefuls and the first summer blockbusters, this efficient film stands out for at least accomplishing most of its limited goals.

Thirty years ago, screenwriter Larry Cohen, the man behind some quasi-famous drive-in horror movies, was having lunch with Alfred Hitchcock. I gather that the conversation went about like this:

Cohen: Hey, I just thought of a great gimmick for a suspense movie: a man answers a ringing pay phone and he can't hang up!

Sir Alfred: Why can't he hang up?

Cohen: Uh, well, let me get back to you on that.

Twenty-five years later, Cohen came up with an answer: because the caller on the other end of the line is a sniper who threatens to shoot him if he walks away.

By then, unfortunately, Mr. Hitchcock was unavailable to direct "Phone Booth," having been dead for two decades. So the movie wound up in the hands of Joel Schumacher.

This former window dresser, having blown a reported \$110 million budget on 1997's franchise-killing campfest "Batman and Robin," has been working himself back into the movie industry's good graces with low-budget films like "Tigerland." With only \$10 million to spend on "Phone Booth," Schumacher couldn't indulge his taste for flamboyant bombast. He ended up with an 81-minute movie that moves fast and doesn't overstay its welcome.

"Phone Booth" is filmed in the Play-Station Mannerist style of last year's Owen Wilson war movie "Behind Enemy Lines." While earlier generations would pay extra to see gorgeous Technicolor films like "Lawrence of Arabia," young moviegoers now find movies featuring intentionally degraded image quality and dropped frames to be cool because they look like low-resolution video games and web cameras. Further, Schumacher unpredictably interjects fast and slow motion, a technique I've liked ever since the 1980 South African slapstick comedy "The Gods Must Be Crazy."

Cohen's screenplay, however, seems more like a foulmouthed version of a 1956 Rod Serling drama for CBS' live "Playhouse 90" anthology series. Few movies have ever observed more strictly Aristotle's prescribed theatrical unities of time (it's told roughly in real-time), place (almost all of it occurs around the phone booth), and action (no subplots, no flashbacks, no comic relief, no nothing).

Historically, Aristotle's unities proved unnecessary, but it's refreshing to watch them revived in an unlikely setting. Artists often work best under these kinds of artificial constraints.

The movie begins badly with a narrator virtually apologizing for this being a story about a pay phone in an age of cell phones. It quickly picks up, though, with

Colin Farrell, playing a low-rent publicist, striding through Times Square juggling cell phone calls as he tries to land his client, a diminutive white rapper even more obnoxious than he is, on a magazine cover through bluster and backstabbing.

"Phone Booth" was shot very quickly in late 2000. It was finally scheduled for release last fall, but then the Washington Beltway snipers became the biggest story of all time for a couple of weeks, so it was delayed again until now.

One of the minor mysteries of the past two years has been the tens of millions Hollywood has shoveled Farrell's way. Onscreen, he hasn't done much that's memorable. Off screen, he has made himself a nuisance. So, what did the industry see in him that the outside world didn't?

Well, it now appears they had seen his performance in early cuts of "Phone Booth." He's more good than great here, but, unlike his forgettable performance as an MIT valedictorian in last winter's "The Recruit," at least his role as a worthless sleazeball fits him like one of the flashy Italian suits his character wears. (Still, while the studios hope they've found the next Mel Gibson, I suspect they've got the next Rob Lowe.)

Personally, I'm so low on the publicity totem pole that hard-charging jerks like Farrell's character don't pester me. Most of the studio-marketing people I deal with are pleasant and helpful young ladies and gay guys. Anyway, although the movie portrays him as desperately in need of confession and absolution, hustlers like this are so obviously insincere that they're more entertaining than pernicious to anyone with a three-digit IQ.

Unfortunately, Kiefer Sutherland's portrayal of the sniper/caller with effete-ly excellent diction sounds embarrassingly like Kelsey Grammer voicing Bart

Simpson's over-cultivated archnemesis Sideshow Bob. At least since the days of Vincent Price, American audiences have believed that fastidious articulation is the surest sign of a degenerate villain, and Sutherland's performance fully lives down to that stereotype. ■

Rated R for pervasive language and some violence.
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BOOKS

[*Back to the Drawing Board: The Future of the Pro-Life Movement*, ed. Teresa R. Wagner, St. Augustine's Press, 350 pages]

Reassessing Pro-Life Strategy

By Francis J. Beckwith

MY GOOD FRIEND Gregory P. Koukl, one of the most gifted minds in the pro-life movement, often tells the fictional story of a father who, while his back is turned, hears his teenage daughter ask the question, "Daddy, can I kill it?" Koukl then asks his audience, "How should the father respond to his daughter's query?" The audience, in every venue at which Greg has told this story, answers, "He should ask her, 'What is it?'" Although largely untutored in the subtle distinctions of moral philosophy, the audience members understand at a visceral level that the permissibility of killing another being depends on what it is and whether the killing is justified. It really matters whether "it" is a cockroach, the girl's infant brother, or an enemy soldier in combat.

The pro-life movement, from its very beginning, has seen this moral truth as the one strand in the tapestry of republican government that, if removed, will inevitably lead to an unraveling of the

understanding of ourselves and our rights that gave rise to the cluster of beliefs on which the rule of law, constitutional democracy, and human equality depend. The pro-life cause, in a sense, then, is not really *about* abortion, but rather, about who and what we are. It is a movement that makes the argument that the project that began in the Enlightenment—having its metaphysical roots in the biblical notion of the *imago dei* (image of God)—that provided the intellectual scaffolding for the Declaration of Independence, Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, can be, and ought to be, extended to include the true wideness of our human community, that is, to include the unborn.

In this timely volume, *Back to the Drawing Board*, released for the 30th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, Teresa Wagner has assembled an impressive collection of pro-lifers from a wide range of professions across the political and religious spectrum. Each of the authors, in his or her own way, reflects on the pro-life movement's past, its future prospects, and what sorts of strategies might result in demise of *Roe's* regime. There are 28 contributors to this volume, many of whom are well known and have made important and lasting contributions to American politics, law, and policy. These contributors include Richard John Neuhaus, Terrence Jeffrey, Jack Wilke, Bernard Nathanson, Paul Weyrich, Chris Smith, Joseph Sobran, Phyllis Schlafly, Howard Phillips, James Dobson, Nat Hentoff, Daniel Lapin, Judith Reisman, Charles Donovan, and Austin Ruse. The essayists deal with a wide range of topics including Supreme Court jurisprudence, political strategy, policy assessment, the role of religious belief, personal testimony, the effect of abortion on women and the wider culture, and analyses of contemporary culture and film.

What stands out about these essays is the spirited way in which the authors offer their arguments, some of which are critical of positions held by other

authors in the same volume. There is a refreshing candor in these essays that one rarely finds in the public square, especially among political types who often see transparency as a sign of weakness rather than strength. I believe what accounts for this is the purity of the pro-life movement's cause. Unlike other political advocates—e.g., lobbyists for the abortion industry—pro-life proponents, as Neuhaus points out in his essay, are part of "a movement for which so many have given so much, with no personal stake in the outcome, other than knowing that they did the right thing."

Wagner offers this outstanding collection as a pro-life self-assessment of where the movement has been and where it may be going. In that spirit, I would like to offer my own analysis by engaging two issues addressed in the book by different authors: (1) the wisdom of pro-life incrementalism; and (2) the bad consequences of abortion on women.

One of the perennial issues among pro-lifers is whether one is justified in promoting some legal restrictions on abortion that are short of the types of laws that pro-lifers would like to see. Although some of the essayists see real value in an incremental pro-life strategy, others do not. Schlafly, for example, voices her displeasure with pro-life leaders who have exhibited a "spirit of compromise" and cites as an example of that spirit the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, the brainchild of the inestimable Hadley Arkes and recently signed into law by President George W. Bush. The Act requires that any child who survives an abortion be immediately accorded all the protections of the law that are accorded all other postnatal human beings. Although it is, in the words of Arkes, a "modest first step," it is not an insignificant one. For it affirms that an abortion entails the expulsion of a being who, if she survives, should receive all the protections of our laws. But this, of course, raises an awkward question for abortion-choice supporters: what is it, then, about that vaginal passageway that changes the child's nature in such a sig-

nificant fashion that it may be killed without justification before exit but only with justification post-exit? The act puts in place a premise that elicits questions that lead one back to the most important question in this debate: who and what are we? Apparently because the act does not forbid all abortions all the time, Schlafly believes it has no value in advancing the pro-life cause. But, as should be obvious, she is mistaken.

intuitive for the pro-life defenders of the consequentialist strategy to want to provide a cultural environment hospitable to the moral primacy of consequentialism.

Although most commentators trace the public debate over abortion's permissibility to that fateful day in 1973, the philosophical and juridical presuppositions that made abortion a constitutional right, as a number of contributors to

case, they have implicitly acquiesced to their own intellectual demise. Therefore, the pro-life movement has done incredibly well given the influence, cultural status, and financial and institutional resources of its opposition.

The ethical climate of America, and the world, has changed since 1973. The debates over partial-birth abortion, stem-cell research, and human cloning in the mid-to-late 1990s and early 21st century have served to underscore that the question that is often skirted by jurists, politicians, and professional bioethicists—what is the scope of the human community?—can no longer be ignored. After all, if Christopher Reeve is identical to his embryonic self, then we are no more justified in killing an embryo in order to acquire its stem cells so that Mr. Reeve may walk again than we would be in stealing Mr. Reeve's eyes so that Stevie Wonder may see again. The contributors to *Back to the Drawing Board* are asking their fellow citizens to reacquaint themselves with the principles on which such moral judgments are based, principles on which all our liberties are ultimately grounded. ■

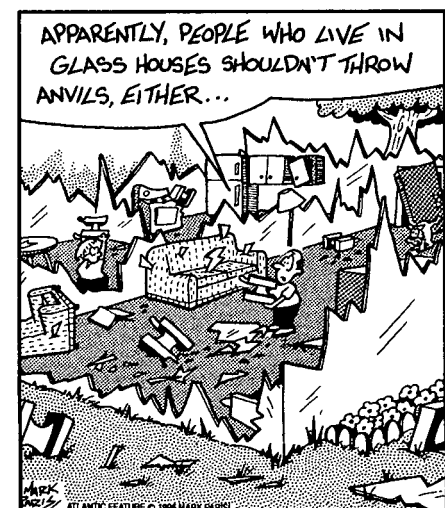
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THE LEFT'S BEST CINEMATIC DEFENSES OF ABORTION-CHOICE SAID NOTHING TO REBUT THE PRO-LIFE CASE.

Because many abortion-choice supporters maintain that abortion is good for women, some of the essayists advance arguments that conclude that abortion has negative physical and psychological consequences for women who procure abortions, e.g., increased risk of breast cancer, guilt, and depression. These writers seem to be saying that the only way to persuade the general public, as well as the courts, that abortion is a serious moral wrong—that ought to be restricted if not completely banned—is for the pro-life movement to show that many women significantly suffer as the result of the process of choosing as well as undergoing an abortion. Although such a strategy is now the rage among pro-life policy wonks, there are good reasons to call it into question. After all, from a strictly moral point of view, abortion is not a serious moral wrong just because the woman endures psychic and physical hurt as a result of having an abortion. For many abortions do not result in such suffering to the women who have them, and clearly no pro-lifer would want to say that those abortions are morally benign. Therefore, to offer consequentialism as a strategy for pro-life victory is to concede the first premise of the abortion-choice movement: the self-interest and well-being of an autonomous adult (in this case, the pregnant woman) trumps any other interests. It seems, therefore, counter-

this book point out, were firmly entrenched in the elite culture that had been clamoring for a right to abortion since the mid-1950s. Consequently, the right-to-life movement, as it was called in the mid-1970s, got a late start. Nevertheless, it has left an indelible mark on American culture and has for the most part forced its opposition to employ euphemisms ("product of conception" instead of "unborn human being") and empty libertarian platitudes ("pro-choice" and "reproductive liberty" instead of "pro-abortion" and "abortion rights") rather than engage the most important question in this debate: who and what are we?

Consider Hollywood's most recent abortion-choice films: "If These Walls Could Talk" and "The Cider House Rules." In neither case did the film's script seriously engage the pro-life arguments, as contributor Barbara Nicolosi points out in her outstanding essay. These were the Left's best cinematic defenses of abortion-choice, and they said nothing to rebut the pro-life case. In fact, they pretended the case did not exist. It is no wonder then that pro-lifers make up a larger percentage of the public than they did at the time of *Roe*. When abortion-choice advocates offer nothing new or creative in reply to their opposition's strongest arguments, and when they have a virtual monopoly on the communicative means by which to make their

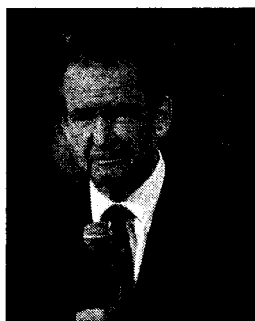


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Germany's War Wounds

By Paul Gottfried

THE EXPRESSIONS OF OPPOSITION to the war with Iraq from German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and from his foreign minister Joschka Fischer have evoked on the American side outraged responses, from complaints that Germans do not appreciate all we did for them to neoconservative attributions of Nazi motives to the current German pacifism. Against this background it might be useful to note the appearance of three books in the last four years, by novelists W.G. Sebald, Günter Grass, and by military historian Jörg Friedrich.

Grass devotes part of his newest book, *Crab Walk*, to the Soviet torpedoing of the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a ship full of German refugees in the Baltic that went down with 8,000 passengers on Jan. 31, 1945; in a less novelistic fashion, both Sebald and Friedrich take on the bombing of German cities from 1941 until the end of the war. Of the two books that treat the bombing, Friedrich's *Der Brand (The Fire)* is the more densely documented, and though written like spasmodic news dispatches, the more factually relevant study of something that should not have happened. Sebald's *On the Natural History of Destruction* combines a moral indictment of German novelists and historians for sidestepping the mass murder of their people with reminiscences about growing up in the postwar German rubble.

All three books, which are being sold together on the German Amazon.com, have received favorable treatment in the German national press and, remarkably enough, in the leftist *Der Spiegel*. The association of Grass, a Noble Prize recipient, with the pro-Communist Left for forty years probably has not hurt and may have neutralized objections from German intellectuals that he is making the Germans appear to be "victims." Some of the same built-up grace may be working for the other two authors, who

have published on the Jewish victims of Nazi persecution. Although Friedrich's book, unlike the others, has not been translated, conservative German papers have given it loads of attention. And so did his most acrimonious foreign critics in the British *Daily Telegraph* who laced into Friedrich for suggesting that Churchill, the most admired of all English statesmen, was a war criminal.

What Friedrich demonstrates, from the recorded statements of Sir Winston Churchill and the air commanders Sir Charles Portal and Sir Arthur Harris, is that British leaders from 1940 on intended to bring Germany to its knees by wiping out civilian populations. Whereas 567 Englishmen died in the much-publicized bombing of Coventry (and about 21,000 in all of the German bombing of England), the Anglo-American side, and particularly the British, destroyed in the range of 650,000 German civilians. Most of this went on in the final year of the war, when German cities were relatively defenseless and the British side had abandoned the argument that it was destroying weapons and war materiel in favor of the idea that it was waging a "moral struggle." In the final section of his book, Friedrich details the destruction in wartime Germany of artwork, collections of priceless books, monuments, and churches. Among the most spiteful of such destructive acts was the firebombing, on April 17, 1945, of the complex of buildings that had until 1918 formed the Prussian royal residence and the surrounding town of Potsdam. In all, 1,700 tons of bombs were dropped over a few square miles, until they had obliterated 47 percent of the historical buildings and killed 5,000 residents. Although this malicious act had no conceivable effect on the already decided outcome of the war, it allowed the British command to express disdain for "Prussian militarism."

The massive use of phosphorous bombs, when they became available as a weapon of choice, was turned with deadly effect against the historic sections of German cities and villages. Although these *Altstädte* had little if any military

value, their stones and wood did explode quickly, thereby causing the indiscriminate devastation that the firebombing was supposed to create. Churchill and Harris hoped to develop this aerial warfare effectively enough to bring death to at least 100,000 residents of a German city. Despite repeated efforts, particularly in the Northwest corner of the country, between the Maas and the Ruhr, the British bombers failed to get their kill. But among the totals they did achieve were 45,450 killed in Hamburg in July 1943, about 25,000 in Berlin, after several years of intermittent bombing, and 35,000 fully identified dead and about the same number of *Teilidentifizierte* (partially identified corpses) killed in Dresden on Feb. 13, 1945. What kept these figures from getting even larger, according to Friedrich, were the high degree of German civilian morale and the continued operation of *Flak*, the German Aerial Defense Unit. British attempts to win the struggle by smashing German morale did not work; although by 1943 most civilians had grown contemptuous of the German Ministry of Propaganda, they also believed they were fighting an implacable enemy. Thus Berliners did what they could to stave off aerial attacks, and when there was little they could do to keep the bombers away, hid in well-insulated bunkers.

In the *Atlantic Monthly*, Christopher Hitchens, who shares at least two neo-conservative fixations, residual Teutono-

phobia and a passion to bring democracy by force, looks at those German authors who have begun to dwell on German suffering during World War II. A friend of Sebald's, Hitchens is upset that his fellow writer would be so carried away by his subject. Those Germans who told Sebald about their wartime agonies show "a combination of arrogance and self-pity tinged with anti-Semitism."

THE EAST GERMAN COMMUNIST REGIME HAD A VESTED INTEREST IN PLAYING UP THE WESTERN ALLIES' BOMBING OF GERMAN CIVILIAN POPULATIONS.

Sebald supposedly indulged in similar self-pity when he spoke about the "war of annihilation" against German cities. Hitchens is deeply shocked at the way he mourns the *Luftwaffe's* crew slightly more than he regrets the raid on Norwich. Unfortunately for his outlook on the war, Sebald was living in a North German town that had been targeted for obliteration. And the losses the inhabitants endured in his part of Germany vastly exceeded, on a scale of 10-to-1, those that the British sustained during the Battle of Britain.

The commentators on British firebombing, however, did not contribute much toward the opposition to the Iraq war being expressed by the Red-Green coalition in power. Friedrich and Sebald have produced books that would be more characteristic of the '50s and '60s than of the present age. Hitchens is dead wrong when he remarks, "[T]he peaceful and democratic reunification of Germany has impelled or permitted Sebald and other writers to revisit the half-hidden past." Forty years ago, West German politicians and historians were not shy about uncovering Allied atrocities against Germans. Back then neither the anti-fascist thought-police, now shielding their countrymen against national pride, nor compulsory German self-hate held back historical research.

Most importantly, the German Left and the East German Communist regime had a vested interest in playing up the

Western Allies' bombing of German civilian populations. The Americans and British maintained both armies and weapons systems in West Germany in order to contain the Soviets and their East German allies. The most bloated figures for the number killed by the British in the attack on Dresden—300,000—came from the assistant chairman of the East German Council of Min-

isters in 1955. In 1977, the *Soviet Encyclopedia* cooked up the more modest (but exaggerated) figure of 120,000. By contrast, West German authors wrote tracts without reservations not only on Anglo-American bombing but also on the murder, mayhem, and rape of the Red Army as it moved through Eastern Germany.

Neither Schröder nor Fischer nor the leftist press that endorses them wants any part of the present attempt to bring up atrocities perpetrated on their countrymen by the Allies. They treat these killings as necessary to free Germany from fascism, a process they are continuing by providing tax money to agencies and organizations that expose and harass German nationalists and those who do not accept Germany's place in the new world order. Fischer, who once aided the Bader-Meinhof Gang and then grumbled at German reunification, is the Teutonic Jane Fonda, an ostentatiously self-hating German who has published ten booklets to express his revulsion for his own country and his hope that it will soon disappear. During the Serbian crisis, Fischer, like his mentor, the cultural Marxist Teutonophobe Jürgen Habermas, looked forward to the "replacement of classical international law based on nations by a new cosmic regime built on human rights." To present such a figure as a German chauvinist is an act of lunacy or colossal ignorance.



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Unlike the struggle against Serbia, in Iraq the United States declared war against a Third-World government, which means, for the multicultural imagination of the German Left, against an object of veneration. Fischer would think differently if the enemy were Jörg Haider's Austria. It was he who led the way in calling for international sanctions when the anti-immigrationist Haider was entering an Austrian coalition government four years ago. At a time when over 80 percent of the German population opposed American military action against Iraq, and as high a percentage opposed the American use of German bases, it would have been imprudent for any German politician, including Fischer, to be associated with the Bush administration. But that is not the same as suggesting that critics of the American war policy are thinking about what happened in the 1940s. Most of them were not around at that time; in any case contemporary Germans live in a society in which all pre-1945 German states are treated in the same negative way that our media depict the Confederacy. Finally, it has to be mentioned that given the presence of about 7 million Muslims (out of a total population of 82 million) in Germany, over 60 percent of whom vote for the Left, the Red-Green coalition is pursuing its interest by protesting the waging of a war against a predominantly Muslim country.

The themes of Friedrich's and Sebald's books most resonate are among two groups: older Germans who lived through the events they describe and the anti-globalist national Right. Both may have been targeted by what Hitchens styles "the rightwing mass-circulation tabloid *Das Bild*," which "has called Churchill a war criminal and is serializing Friedrich's work." When the German nationalist weekly *Junge Freiheit* asked readers who lived through the fire-bombing to contribute accounts of their experiences, the editors were flooded with narratives. Meanwhile other German newspapers have begun the same practice, with the same results. Living through the *Brand* is a demonstration of the "will to endure [*Durchhaltewille*]" that elderly Germans talk about the way Nazi and Soviet victims discuss their near-death experiences. Curiously these elders welcome comparisons with those who survived the Holocaust and distinguish their wartime trials from the Nazi government that helped to bring about the invasion of Germany.

But there is also the antiwar Right, which extends from the Christian Democratic dissidents Peter Gauweiler and Willy Wimmer and their followers to the anti-immigrationist *Republikaner*. Representatives of this persuasion oppose American imperialism and fall easily into invectives about Tony Blair as an American lapdog. On this embattled Right, resistance to the war goes hand-in-hand with memories about Allied bombing. Nor is there any affection on the nationalist Right for the Red-Green opposition to the Bush policy, which is seen as having nothing to do with specifically German interests. American globalists are right to hate and fear such types. Unlike Fischer, they are not waiting for the German nation to go away and, unlike the Christian Democratic majority, deeply resent any view of their people as moral pariahs. ■

Paul Gottfried is a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College and the author of Multiculturalism and the Politics of Guilt.

[*Dostoevsky: The Mantle of the Prophet, 1871-1881, Joseph Frank, Princeton University Press, 784 pages*]

The Novelist as Prophet

By Patrick Henry Reardon

WHEN MAURICE BARING, in his little 1914 book on modern Russian authors, described Dostoevsky as "the antithesis to Tolstoy, and the second great pillar of Russian prose literature," he confessed that such an opinion, had it been expressed ten years earlier, "would have been met with an incredulous smile amongst the majority of English readers of Russian literature, for Dostoevsky was practically unknown save for his *Crime and Punishment*." Indeed, back in 1905 when Baring had contemplated translating Dostoevsky into English, a publisher told him there would be "no market for such books in England." It was during the ensuing decade, Baring wrote, that Dostoevsky came to be better appreciated as "a creator and a force in literature."

Baring seems to have surmised likewise that Dostoevsky might also turn out to be a prophet. He suspected that those twisted, grossly improbable characters haunting the Dostoevskian corpus—Verkhovensky, Stavrogin, Rogozhin, Svidrigailov—though they had seemed exaggerations some decades earlier, were already proving to be the imaginary silhouettes of more substantial lunacies. Baring remarked, "[R]eal life in subsequent years was to produce characters and events of the same kind, which were more startling than Dostoevsky's fiction."

That was in 1914, and Baring himself could hardly have realized, I think, the further terrors soon to fall. At the very moment he reflected on Dostoevsky's premonitions, certain "characters and events" incomparably more startling were at the point of casting their shadows in Europe's doorway. Already the



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horizon grew dark with the First World War, and following fast behind it gathered the further storms of the new century. Indeed, the decade immediately after Baring's remarks would prove Dostoevsky to be the real prophet of the coming bad times. Thus, Dimitri Mirsky, in his *Intelligentsia of Great Britain*, remarked that "the cult of Dostoevsky began in Great Britain among the intelligentsia during the war."

And Dostoevsky's prophetic reputation continued year by year, as the 20th century grimly reaped the harvest of those heinous seeds whose sowing he had witnessed during the 19th. Now, then, at the beginning of the 21st century, it is hardly surprising that the final volume of Joseph Frank's very fine biography of Dostoevsky should portray him chiefly as a prophet.

One is so glad, first of all, even relieved, to see the arrival of this book. When Frank's first volume on Dostoevsky, *The Seeds of Revolt, 1821-1849*, appeared in 1976, the author, admitting that "[t]he entire project originated about twenty years ago," projected four volumes to complete the work. His second installment, *The Years of Ordeal, 1850-1859*, advancing Dostoevsky's life a mere ten years more, appeared in 1983. (A stamp in my own copy testifies that the book was removed from circulation at the "East Providence Public Library, Rumford Branch." Perhaps some overworked librarian, distracted and losing sight of the big picture, judged the book outdated some years ago.) Volume Three, *The Stir of Liberation, 1860-1865*, was published in 1986, and in its preface Frank finally confessed that his project had now grown to five volumes. (Four years later, in 1990, Frank published his *Through the Russian Prism*, in which he brought together critical essays germane to the subject in varying degrees.) In 1995, *The Miraculous Years, 1865-1871*, the fourth volume of the series, covered the next six years of Dostoevsky's life. And now the appearance of this fifth and final volume brings Frank's total achievement (roughly 2,500 pages) to a most stunning climax.

Frank chiefly accomplishes two things in this fifth volume. First, drawing mainly on Dostoevsky's copious journals and letters, he carefully chronicles the last decade of the novelist's life. Some of this material has been available only since 1990, when G.M. Fridlender's definitive edition of Dostoevsky's writings was completed in 30 volumes. Frank's work is invaluable for including so much of this material in summary and coherent forms and for throwing light on many hitherto obscure details of Dostoevsky's career. For example, thanks to a letter written Feb. 4, 1872, but not published until recently, we now know that Dostoevsky had just received from the tsarevich a gift of money that enabled him to pay off most of his creditors early that year.

Second, Frank devotes a great deal of space in this book to the interpretation of Dostoevsky's final writings, particularly *The Brothers Karamazov*. Indeed, because Dostoevsky is of greater popu-

lar interest as a writer than for any other reason, one suspects that for many readers this will be the most significant section of the book here under review.

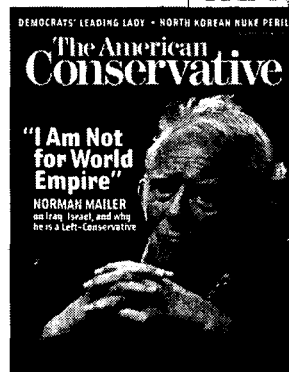
In this regard, it is instructive to compare Frank's fifth volume to the earlier installments in the series. As accomplished as a literary critic as he is a biographer, Frank dedicated a certain number of pages in each of the earlier volumes to analyzing those works of Dostoevsky crafted during the time period covered by the respective volume of his biography. For instance, in *The Seeds of Revolt* Frank spent some half-dozen pages on an analysis of *The Double*, and 38 pages of *The Stir of Liberation* were devoted to *Notes from Underground*. In *The Miraculous Years*, Frank discussed *Crime and Punishment* for 50 pages. The difference in Volume Five is immediately evident, if we observe that Frank devotes an entire 140 pages to an analysis of *The Brothers Karamazov*.

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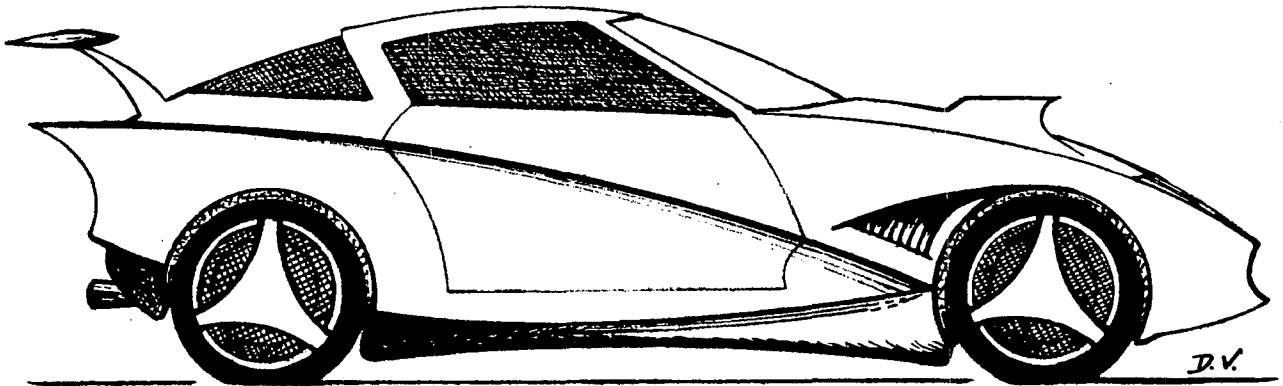
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The story of the murder of Fyodor Karamazov in *The Brothers* is the setting for Dostoevsky's reflections on the essential (that is to say, *de esse*) importance of patriarchy. For Dostoevsky, patriarchy pertains to the defining structure of reality, both human and divine. Therefore, the killing of Karamazov by one of his sons becomes for Dostoevsky a symbol of modern man's attempt to get rid of God the Father. Although it is the illegitimate son Smerdyakov who actually murders old Fyodor, it is the intellectual and cultured Ivan who justifies the slaying of God, whom he regards as equally cruel and worthy to die. Ivan and Smerdyakov, the detached theorist and filthy doer of the deed, are two aspects of the same person, as it were. This symbolic equation of the death of God and the death of the Karamazovs' father is especially perceived in the discussion in which Ivan tells the youngest son, Alyosha, his parable of the Grand Inquisitor. Ivan argued in that discussion that the eternal Father should be definitively rejected. Ivan becomes, then, the spokesman for modern man's rebellion against God, that radically mutinous Nihilism which Dostoevsky understood to be the source of all modern spiritual, intellectual, social, and even political disintegration.

Ivan's defiance ends in suicide, as do the similar spiritual rebellions in *Notes from Underground* and *The Devils*. To kill God, the source of life, was to deprive oneself of life. Those suicides thus prefigured what Dostoevsky believed to be the historical destiny of the modern world without God. (Many years ago, when I was about 100 pages into a first

reading of my first Dostoevsky novel, *Crime and Punishment*, I recall feeling fairly sure that Raskolnikov would commit suicide at its end. Only later did I learn that Dostoevsky, at that point in the novel, was not sure just how Raskolnikov would turn out! Eventually, of course, the story's suicide is Svidrigailov, who represents the rebellious element in Raskolnikov.) It was Dostoevsky's conviction that prodigal human-

(like Keats's Cortez discovering the Pacific). We examine what the prophets say in order to benefit from their insight, but an insight is not in every instance a balanced view of reality. Ultimately, therefore, prophecy is supposed to give place to a serene, more seasoned wisdom. The best general rule on prophecy is: "Despise not prophecies. Put all things to the test. Hold fast to what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21).

HUMANITY'S RETURN TO THE DIVINE PATERNITY IS THE MOST BASIC MOTIF OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION.

ity's only alternative to self-destruction lies in relinquishing the pig sties of its exile and returning to the ever-waiting Father.

In this underlying affirmation that man's true destiny must be found in the return to the Father, Dostoevsky draws on the deepest fonts, both pagan and biblical, of Western culture. For instance, his thesis should put the reader in mind of two of the most important and incomparable sagas bequeathed us from antiquity, the stories of Joseph (Genesis 37-50) and Odysseus (particularly Book XXIV of the *Odyssey*), both of which deserve repeated and very close readings. Each of those dramatic narratives climaxes with the restoration of the son (indeed, twelve sons in the biblical story) to the father, which restorations provide the eschatological tension of the narratives. It is arguable, moreover, that humanity's return to the divine Paternity is the most basic motif of Western civilization, as it certainly is of the Christian religion.

In treating Dostoevsky as a prophet, however, as Frank in my judgment correctly does, it is useful to bear in mind the limitations of prophecy. Traditionally, we should insist, prophets are not supposed to get the last word. Prophecy is an exercise of inspired rhetoric, not reason. Prophecies are rarely syllogistic and seldom tell the whole truth. Moreover, prophets speak in the gripping but occasionally inexact images of poetry

It is in respect to two points in Dostoevsky that I reflect on the limitations of prophecy. First, with respect to the relationship between faith and reason. Reason, in the writings of Dostoevsky, appears habitually as the enemy of faith, but I do not agree with Frank that Dostoevsky's faith was irrational. Seriously questioning Frank's gratuitously predicated conflict between faith and reason, I would argue that Dostoevsky's polemical prophecies were directed against, not reason as such, but reason employed as an act of rebellion against its divine Source. Thus contextualized, Dostoevsky's negative comments on reason should not be taken as the last word on its relationship to faith.

Second, with respect to Dostoevsky's radical preference for monarchy as a political system, his views on the essential role of the tsar, like Ezekiel's predictions of the Babylonians capturing Tyre, have not been sustained by history. I submit that his fiercely anti-democratic attitude, the *verso* of his monarchical politics, is not an instance when we need to give the prophet the last word.

Those reservations aside, I believe that Baring best summarized the enduring value of the Russian novelist under consideration: "Dostoevsky seems to get nearer to the unknown, to what lies beyond the flesh, than any other writer." ■

Patrick Henry Reardon is a Senior Editor of Touchstone.

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Decapitation, Old Style

The incomparable Peter Simple—a pseudonym—writes in London's *Daily Telegraph* that he has always supported lost causes. "In our age, lost causes are

almost the only causes that deserve support. The cause of Saddam Hussein, however, is an exception." (Phew!) Simple goes on, "We shall not be found among those who lament his downfall." But something rubs him the wrong way: "a certain ambiguous pathos in press photographs of American soldiers lounging among fake antiques in the various Saddam palaces. When the mighty fall, however detestable and uncivilized they may be, we cannot help being shaken."

Hear, hear! When the mob stormed Versailles, it would have taken a republican heart of stone not to shed a tear for Marie-Antoinette's fineries ending up in the hands of the great unwashed. Worse was the case of the Winter Palace in Moscow. The grease monkeys climbing all over the Tsarina's beautiful furniture must have been as awful a sight as anyone can imagine. Not to mention the sack of the Summer Palace in Peking, where western barbarians ran riot. The intrusion of the rabble has always been shocking, starting with the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Black Tuesday. The Byzantine emperor, Constantine XI Paleologos, knew his number was up, and—unlike Saddam—descended with great dignity and joined the last Greek defenders. He was slain by a brute almost immediately, but legend has it that the victor, Mehmet II, had the killer executed. *Noblesse oblige* and all that. Still, the Turks jumping all over the gold and purple elegance of Byzantium was an aesthetic outrage, a barbarism to end all barbarisms.

The great Napoleon was no barbar-

ian. He married Marie-Louise, the Hapsburg great-niece of the murdered Marie-Antoinette, for political reasons, although he always claimed that Tsar Alexander was his good friend and that he would have preferred to have married into Russian nobility. (A blood pact with the most powerful state in Eastern Europe? Alexander wouldn't hear of it). At Austerlitz, the main armies of Russia and Austria were destroyed by the Corsican in a battle generally regarded as Bonaparte's most brilliant victory. The Austrian emperor sued for peace the next day, as did the Russian Tsar. The Peace of Pressburg was a civilized affair, without any—God forbid—unpleasantries exchanged. Then everyone concerned

victory began with the Greeks. Here's Alexander the Great at Persepolis, having wiped the floor with the Persians. (Attention Secretary Rumsfeld and President Bush: Persians now go by the name of Iranians.) On seeing a huge statue of Xerxes overturned by his men, Alexander stopped and addressed it: "Are we to pass you by and leave you lying on the ground because you campaigned against Greece or are we to set you up again because of your otherwise high-minded nature?" Now for God's sake don't get me wrong. I'm not referring to Saddam's statue being knocked down, only to the magnanimity of great men like Alexander. When Alex and his band of Greeks captured the daughters of Oxyartes, an Iranian baron, the great one chose Roxanne, known as the most beautiful lady in all of Asia. Roxanne means "little star" and Alexander fell rather hard for her. Marriage to a local noble's family made

SADDAM WAS ACCUSED OF MANY THINGS BUT NEVER OF HAVING ANY CLASS.

CLASSY DICTATORS, HOWEVER CRUEL OR MONSTROUS, KNOW WHEN THE BELL TOLLS.

returned to their respective palaces. Seven years later, Napoleon found himself in Moscow while the city burned, but it was Kutusov who had set the place alight, not the invaders. Three years after, Wellington was not as gracious as Napoleon. He not only "slept in Bonnie's bed," he also slept with the emperor's mistress. (She claimed, "*Mon-sieur le Duc est le plus fort.*" She would, wouldn't she? Wellington, after all, was the winner).

Like many things, magnanimity in

sound political sense—for example, a bit like Tommy Franks and a local Shi'ite lassie—but Alexander had really lost his heart.

When I first heard Pentagon newspeak refer to assassination as "decapitation," I naturally thought of Charles I and Louis XVI. Both men had their heads chopped off. Two hundred years later decapitation means something different altogether. On the fateful day of June 18, 1815, at Waterloo, Bonaparte was spotted galloping towards his headquarters

by an eagle-eyed British gunner. "I've got the ogre on my sights," he yelled to a superior officer. But he was refused permission to fire. "We don't do this sort of thing ..."

Marshal Murat was once surrounded by Cossacks in the days leading up to the battle of Borodino in 1812. He was recognized by his flamboyant uniform and plumed hat. The Cossacks bowed in respect and showed him the way back to his lines.

When Napoleon was finally defeated and exiled to St. Helena, the allies had decided no more nice guys *à la* Elba, where the Corsican had enjoyed his court in full. This time he was permitted to take with him a group of courtiers and a dozen servants—his Mameluke bodyguard, a butler, a cook, three valets, three footmen, an accountant, a pantryman, and a lamp cleaner. (One of the courtiers, the Marquis de Montholon, was chosen because he had a very pretty wife, Albine, who eventually left under a cloud for having cuckolded Napoleon, whose mistress she became, with one of the English officers.) Ah, and one last thing. Throughout the miserable six years that Bonnie stayed on the rock, he never ceased to sneer at Hudson Lowe, the governor, for never having heard a shot fired in anger. But that was untrue. Lowe had fought, but never against Napoleon, which in the latter's mind was like not having fought at all. I wonder what the emperor would have thought of the neocons, to a man volunteers for Vietnam?

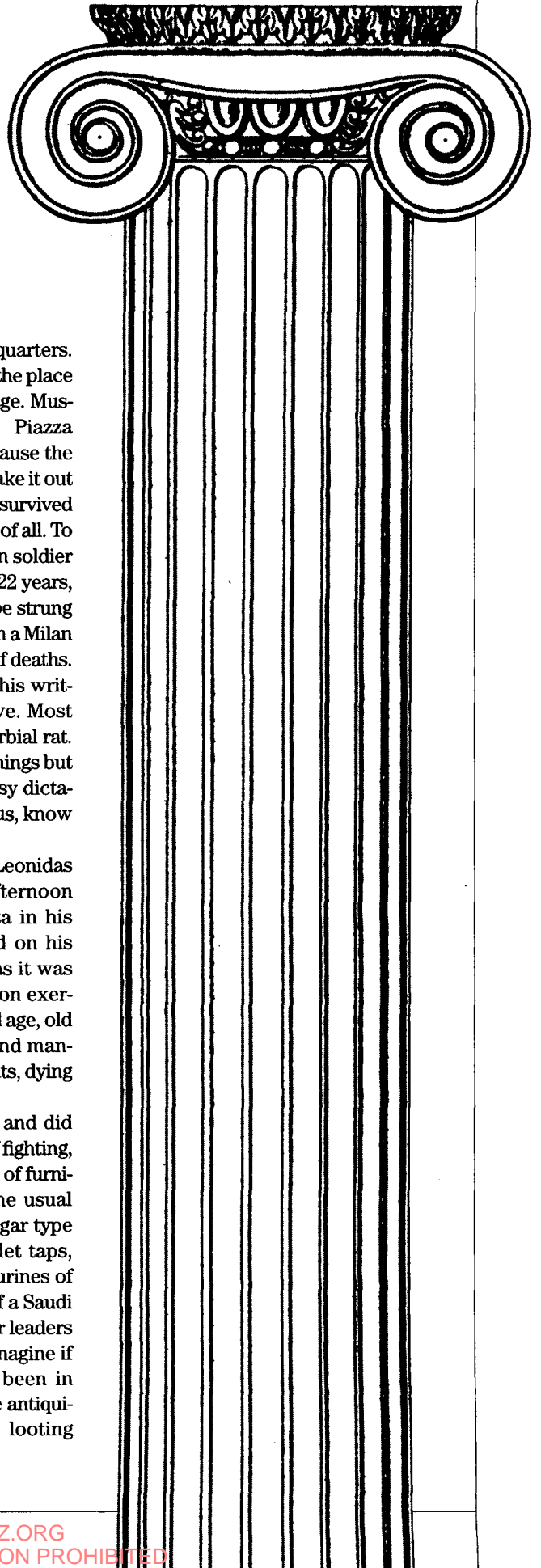
Which brings me back to the horrors of modern warfare. Hitler made sure he did not fall into enemy hands because of the humiliation involved. The Reich Chancellery was a Spartan maze of prac-

tical office space and sleeping quarters. There was nothing fancy about the place for the Russian soldiers to pillage. Mussolini's grandiose offices in Piazza Venezia were never sacked because the Italians have too much style to take it out on the furniture. Musso's offices survived intact, but he had the worse fate of all. To be caught dressed like a German soldier fleeing the country he ruled for 22 years, to be shot like a dog, and then be strung up by his feet with his mistress in a Milan piazza must be the least heroic of deaths.

And now to Saddam. As of this writing, he may or may not be alive. Most likely he's hiding like the proverbial rat. Saddam was accused of many things but never of having any class. Classy dictators, however cruel or monstrous, know when the bell tolls.

I particularly liked Raphael Leonidas Trujillo, who having had an afternoon session with the young Pepita in his country place, was ambushed on his way back to Ciudad Trujillo, as it was back then. Despite his afternoon exertions and his advanced girth and age, old Leonidas took out his pistol and managed to shoot one of his assailants, dying in the process.

Mind you, Saddam did stay and did put up a sort of fight. His style of fighting, however, was as bad as his style of furniture—Peter Simple again—"the usual appurtenances of the most vulgar type of tyrants: gold baths and bidet taps, pearl-inlaid plastic gnomes, figurines of ballerinas" and so on, worthy of a Saudi or a Kuwaiti nabob, the kind our leaders suck up to *ad nauseam*. Just imagine if the tyrant's possessions had been in refined taste and of respectable antiquity. I might have done a little looting myself. ■



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